



NUNC COGNOSCO EX PARTE



TRENT UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

PRESENTED BY

J. G. Roberts, Esq.  
Reed Shaw Osler Limited





Digitized by the Internet Archive  
in 2019 with funding from  
Kahle/Austin Foundation

<https://archive.org/details/comediehumaine0032balz>

H. DE BALZAC

---

THE COMÉDIE HUMAINE







*HOW THE CHÂTEAU D'AZAY CAME TO BE BUILT.*



H. DE BALZAC

---

# DROLL STORIES

(CONTES DROLATIQUES)

WITH  
SARRASINE, ETC.

VOL. II

WITH A PREFACE BY

JNO. RUDD, B.A.



LONDON  
PRINTED FOR SUBSCRIBERS ONLY

1899

PQ2161 . G4 [u.32]

## CONTENTS

	PAGE
<i>PREFACE</i> . . . . .	ix
<i>THE SUCCUBUS</i> —	
I. WHAT THE SUCCUBUS WAS . . . . .	I
II. THE PROCEEDINGS TAKEN . . . . .	21
III. WHAT THE SUCCUBUS DID . . . . .	37
IV. HOW THE MOORISH WOMAN WAS WITH DIFFICULTY BURNED ALIVE . . . . .	46
<i>THE MONK AMADOR</i> . . . . .	58
<i>BERTHA THE PENITENT</i> —	
I. HOW SHE REMAINED A MAIDEN THOUGH MARRIED . . . . .	79
II. HOW BERTHA BEHAVED, ETC. . . . .	89
III. HER HORRIBLE CHASTISEMENT . . . . .	105
<i>HOW D'AZAY CHÂTEAU WAS BUILT</i> . . . . .	116
<i>THE FAIR IMPERIA MARRIED</i> —	
I. HOW SHE WAS CAUGHT IN THE NET . . . . .	133
II. HOW THIS MARRIAGE ENDED . . . . .	144
<i>IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT FORTUNE IS FEMI- NINE</i> . . . . .	154
<i>THE PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES</i> . . . . .	172
<i>SARRASINE</i> . . . . .	197
<i>A PASSION IN THE DESERT</i> . . . . .	239
<i>THE GIRL WITH GOLDEN EYES</i> . . . . .	257



## LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

HOW THE CHÂTEAU D'AZAY CAME TO BE BUILT (p. 116) *Frontispiece.*

	PAGE
THE SUCCUBUS . . . . .	41
THE MONK AMADOR . . . . .	69
IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT FORTUNE IS FEMININE . . . . .	170

*Drawn specially for this edition.*

152481



## PREFACE.

THE second volume of the “*Contes Drolatiques*” opens with the far-famed “*Succubus*,” which, perhaps more than anything else written by Balzac, brought down upon him the malediction of the church. It is taken as being a faithful painting of the methods of the inquisition. The naïveté of the manner of arranging the indictment and making the victim duly and “legally” amenable to the decrees of the spiritual court is excellently done.

The prologues and epilogues which follow the “*Droll Stories*” in this volume formed originally the prefaces and conclusions of the three series of ten stories each; they are here arranged in the order in which they were written.

The remainder of the volume contains scenes properly belonging to the *Comédie*: “*Sarrasine*” and “*La Fille aux yeux d’or*”—the latter being the third story in the “*Histoire des Treize*”—The Thirteen—being in Scenes from Parisian Life; while “*Une Passion dans le désert*” is in Scenes from Military Life; which consists of but two, that one and “*Les Chouans*.<sup>1</sup>” This is the first appearance of these stories in an English dress; for, although numbers of “*A Passion in the Desert*” have been offered, they have either been mutilated by expurgation or rendered unduly morbid by adding to the words of the author.

“*Sarrasine*” is probably one of Balzac’s strongest short stories, and is terse, bright, and incisive in style. It touches on a custom at one time far more general than is usually supposed. Readers of the “*Tatler*,” “*Spectator*,” and other magazines, too numerous to particularize, of the time of Addison, Steele, *et al.*, will remember the frequent allusions to

that species of Italian tenor singers. Indeed it is not necessary to hark very far back to recall the death of a world-famous artist who was with good reason believed to have belonged to this class. It lies to the surgeon and sculptor to determine whether a man so capable an anatomist as a sculptor must necessarily be, as was Sarrasine, could be deceived by the limbs of a eunuch ; it may have been that the lower ones were hidden ; but how could he be mistaken in the biceps ? For the rest the lights and shadows are beyond cavil ; it is a powerful story of a strong man—willful, hot-headed, and a genius, contrasted with a non-virile specimen of the genus. It is probably the only story written by Balzac in which a woman does not figure—that is in the story proper, which is narrated to the Marquise de Rochefide by—for the only time, in such a case—an unknown *conteur*.

The second, “*Une Passion dans le désert*,” is a poem. Apart from the tinge to be found in reading between the lines, not in any sense forced upon the attention of the reader, it is an exquisite painting of that most uncongenial of subjects—the desert. Here the profundity of its desolation is brought vividly out ; the sheening sand ; that lone, once habited, grotto, is made instinct with a former resident ; the palm trees ; the solitary eagle winging its way in lonesomeness are all marvels of the truly beautiful in art ; while the description of the panther is absolutely true to nature. One cannot but bow to a genius who can make so grand a painting from a source so sterile in itself.

“*La Fille aux yeux d’or*” is another powerful work. In this, though, de Balzac, while at his best as a moralist and philosopher, fails to grasp the calm, *sangfroid* air of a gentleman. De Marsay, to the student of English literature, is nothing more than a cad aping nobility. It shows out in striking contrast to the English “thoroughbred” later depicted by Ouida, and much to the advantage of the latter. De Marsay is insolent and stubborn, not proud and strong.

His giving him English blood to explain his cool insouciance only serves to make his impertinence and littleness more glaring. The mulatto we have often met in fiction before, so also the witch-mother and the mysterious carriage rides and blindfolding. The story itself is a good one and these faults would not strike the eyes of Frenchmen, for whom the story was written. His description of the mob that can be aroused to revolution by a *bon mot* has been strikingly exemplified in the recent occurrences in France; while the race for gold or pleasure can be seen in any of our own cities, and with the like results.

“Sarrasine” was placed by Balzac in the volume entitled “La Maison Nucingen,” along with “Les Secrets de la princesse de Cadignan,” “Les Employés,” “Facino Cane,” and the title story; being published by Werdet in October 1838. It became a Parisian Scene six years later.

“Une Passion dans le désert,” published first in 1832, took its place in the Comédie in conjunction with “Les Chouans,” with which it was always afterward associated, in 1846, being, as said, the second of the only two stories in Military Scenes.

For the bibliography of “La Fille aux yeux d’or,” the reader is referred to the Preface to “The Thirteen,” of which this story was always an integral part.

J. R.





# THE SUCCUBUS.

## I.

### WHAT THE SUCCUBUS WAS.

✠ *In nomine Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

IN the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, before me, HIÉROME CORNILLE, grand inquisitor and ecclesiastical judge (thereto commissioned by the members of the chapter of Saint-Maurice, the cathedral of Tours, having of this deliberated in presence of our lord Jean de Monsoreau, archbishop—namely, the grievances and complaints of the inhabitants of the said town, whose request is here subjoined), have appeared certain noblemen, citizens and inhabitants of the diocese, who have stated the following facts concerning a demon suspected of having taken the features of a woman, who has much afflicted the minds of the diocese, and is at present a prisoner in the jail of the chapter; and in order to arrive at the truth of the said charge we have opened the present court, this Monday, the Eleventh day of December, after mass, to communicate the evidence of each witness to the said demon, to interrogate her upon the said crimes to her imputed, and to judge her according to the laws enforced *contra dæmonios.*\*

In this inquiry has assisted me to write the evidence therein given, Guillaume Tournebouche, rubrican of the chapter, a learned man.

Firstly has come before us one Jehan, surnamed Tortebras,

\* Against devils.

a citizen of Tours, keeping by license the hostelry of la Cigoygne, situate on the Place du Pont, and one who has sworn by the salvation of his soul, his hand upon the holy Evangelists, to state no other thing than that which by himself hath been seen and heard. He hath stated as here followeth :

“ I declare that about two years before the feast of St. Jehan, upon which are the grand illuminations, a gentleman, at first unknown to me, but belonging without doubt to our lord the King, and at that time returned into our country from the Holy Land, came to me with the proposition that I should let to him at a rental a certain country-house by me built, in the quit-rent of the chapter over against the place called of St. Étienne, and the which I let to him for nine years, for the consideration of three besans of fine gold.

“ In the said house was placed by the said knight a fair wench having the appearance of a woman, dressed in the strange fashion of the Saracens and Mahometans, whom he would allow by none to be seen or to be approached within a bowshot, but whom I have seen with my own eyes, weird feathers upon her head, and eyes so flaming that I cannot adequately describe them, and from which gleamed forth the fire of hell.

“ The defunct knight having threatened with death whoever should appear to spy about the said house, I have by reason of great fear left the said house, and I have until this day secretly kept in my mind certain presumptions and doubts concerning the bad appearance of the said foreigner, who was more strange than any woman, her equal not having as yet by me been seen.

“ Many persons of all conditions having at the time believed the said knight to be dead, but kept upon his feet by virtue of certain charms, philtres, spells, and diabolical sorceries of this seeming woman, who wished to settle in our country, I declare that I have always seen the said knight so

ghastly pale that I can only compare his face to the wax of a Paschal candle, and to the knowledge of all the people of the hostelry of la Cigoyne, this knight was interred nine days after his first coming. According to the statement of his groom, the defunct had been chalorously coupled with the said Moorish woman during seven whole days shut up in my house, without coming out from her, the which I heard him horribly avow upon his death-bed. Certain persons at the present time have accused this she-devil of holding the said gentleman in her clutches by her long hair, the which was furnished with certain warm properties by means of which are communicated to Christians the flames of hell in the form of love, which work in them until their souls are by this means drawn from their bodies and possessed by Satan.

“ But I declare that I have seen nothing of this excepting the said dead knight, bowelless, emaciated, wishing, in spite of his confessor, still to go to this wench ; and then he has been recognized as the lord de Bueil, who was a crusader, and who was, according to certain persons of the town, under the spell of a demon whom he had met in the Asiatic country of Damascus or elsewhere.

“ Afterward I have left my house to the said unknown lady, according to the clauses in the deed of lease.

“ The said lord of Bueil, being defunct, I have nevertheless been into my house in order to learn from the said foreign woman if she wished to remain in my dwelling, and after great trouble was led before her by a strange, half-naked black man, whose eyes were white.

“ Then I have seen the said Moorish woman in a little room, shining with gold and jewels, lighted with strange lights, upon an Asiatic carpet, where she was seated, lightly attired, with another gentleman, who was there imperiling his soul ; and I had not the heart bold enough to look upon her, seeing that her eyes would have incited me immediately to yield myself up to her, for already her voice thrilled into my very

belly, filled my brain, and debauched my mind. Finding this, from the fear of God, and also of hell, I have departed with swift feet, leaving my house to her as long as she liked to retain it, so dangerous was it to behold that Moorish complexion from which radiated diabolical heats, beside a foot smaller than it was lawful in a real woman to possess ; and to hear her voice, which pierced into one's heart ! And from that day I have lacked the courage to enter my house from great fear of falling into hell.

“ I have said my say.”

To the said Tortebras we have then shown an Abyssinian, Nubian, or Ethiopian, who, black from head to foot, had been found wanting in certain virile properties with which all good Christians are usually furnished, who, having persevered in his silence, after having been tormented and tortured many times, not without much moaning, has persisted in being unable to speak the language of our country. And the said Tortebras has recognized the said Abyssinian heretic as having been in his home in company with the said demoniacal spirit, and is suspected of having lent his aid to her sorcery.

And the said Tortebras has confessed his great faith in the Catholic religion, and declared no other things to be within his knowledge save certain rumors which were known to every one, of which he had been in no way a witness except in the hearing of them.

In obedience to the citation served upon him has appeared then, Matthew, surnamed Cognefestu, a day-laborer of Saint-Étienne, whom, after having sworn by the holy Evangelists to speak the truth, has confessed to us always to have seen a bright light in the dwelling of the said foreign woman, and heard much wild and diabolical laughter on the days and nights of feasts and fasts, notably during the days of the holy and Christmas weeks, as if a great number of people were in the house.

And he has sworn to having seen, by the windows of the said dwelling, green buds of all kinds in the winter, growing as if by magic, especially roses, in a time of frost, and other things for which there was need of great heat; but of this he was in no way astonished, seeing that the said foreigner threw out so much heat that when she walked in the evening by the side of his wall he found on the morrow his salad grown; and on certain occasions she had, by the touching of her petticoats, caused the trees to put forth leaves and hastened the buds.

Finally, the said Cognefestu has delared to us to know no more, because he worked from early morning, and went to bed at the same hour as the fowls.

Afterward the wife of the aforesaid Cognefestu has by us been required to state also upon oath the things come to her cognizance in this process, and has avowed naught save praises of the said foreigner, because since her coming her man had treated her better in consequence of the neighborhood of this good lady, who filled the air with love as the sun did light, and other incongruous nonsense, which we have not committed to writing.

To the said Cognefestu and to his wife we have shown the said unknown African, who has been seen by them in the gardens of the house, and is stated by them for certain to belong to the said demon. In the third place has advanced Harduin V., lord of Maillé, who, being by us reverentially begged to enlighten the religion of the church, has expressed his willingness so to do, and has, moreover, engaged his word, as a gallant knight, to say no other thing than that which he has seen.

Then he has testified to have known in the army of the Crusades the demon in question, and in the town of Damascus to have seen the knight of Bueil, since defunct, fight at close quarters to be her sole possessor. The above-mentioned wench, or demon, belonged at that time to the knight Geofroy IV., lord of Roche-Pozay, by whom she was said to have

been brought from Touraine, although she was a Saracen; concerning which the knights of France marveled much, as well as at her beauty, which made a great noise and a thousand scandalous ravages in the camp.

During the voyage this wench was the cause of many deaths, seeing that Roche-Pozay had already discomfited certain Crusaders, who wished to keep her to themselves, because she shed, according to certain knights petted by her in secret, joys around her comparable to none others. But in the end the knight of Bueil, having killed Geoffroy de la Roche-Pozay, became lord and master of this young murderess, and placed her in a convent, or harem, according to the Saracen custom. About this time one used to see her and hear her chattering at her entertainments many foreign dialects, such as the Greek of the Latin empire, Moorish, and, above all, French, better than any of those who knew the languages of France best in the Christian host, from which sprang the belief that she was demoniacal.

The said knight Harduin has confessed to us not to have tilted for her in the Holy Land, not from fear, coldness, or other cause, so much as that he believed the time had arrived for him to bear away a portion of the true cross, and also he had belonging to him a noble lady of the Greek country, who saved him from this danger in denuding him of love, morning and night, seeing that she took all of it substantially from him, leaving him none in his heart or elsewhere for others.

And the said knight has assured us that the woman living in the country-house of Tortebras was really the said Saracen woman, come into the country from Syria, because he had been invited to a midnight feast at her house by the young lord of Croixmare, who expired the seventh day afterward, according to the statement of the Dame de Croixmare, his mother, ruined at all points by the said wench, whose commerce with him had consumed his vital spirit, and whose strange fantasies had squandered his fortune.

Afterward questioned in his quality of a man full of prudence, wisdom, and authority in this country, upon the ideas as entertained concerning the said woman, and summoned by us to open his conscience, seeing that it was question of a most abominable case of Christian faith and divine justice, answer has been made by the said knight :

That by certain of the host of Crusaders it has been stated to him that always this she-devil was a maid to him who embraced her, and that Mammon was for certain occupied in her, making for her a new virtue for each of her lovers, and a thousand other foolish sayings of drunken men, which were not of a nature to form a fifth Gospel. But for a fact he, an old knight on that turn of life, and knowing nothing more of the aforesaid, felt himself again a young man in that last supper with which he had been regaled by the lord of Croixmare ; then the voice of this demon went straight to his heart before flowing into his ears, and had awakened so great a love in his body that his life was ebbing from the place whence it should flow, and that eventually, but for the assistance of Cyprus wine, which he had drunk to blind his sight, and his getting under the table in order no longer to gaze upon the fiery eyes of his diabolical hostess, and not to rend his heart for her, without doubt he would have fought the young Croixmare, in order to enjoy for a single moment this supernatural woman. Since that he had had absolution from his confessor for the wicked thought.

Then, by advice from on high, he had carried back to his spouse his portion of the true cross, and had remained in his own manor, where, in spite of his Christian precautions, the said voice still at certain times tickled his brain, and in the morning often had he in remembrance this demon, warm as brimstone ; and because the look of this wench was so warm that it made him burn like a young man, he half-dead, and because it cost him then many transhipments of the vital

spirit, the said knight has requested us not to confront him with this empress of love, to whom, if it were not the devil, God the Father had granted strange liberties with the minds of men.

Afterward, he retired, after reading over his statement, not without having first recognized the above-mentioned African to be the servant and page of the lady.

In the fourth place, upon the faith pledged by us in the name of the chapter and of our lord archbishop, that he should not be tormented, tortured, nor harassed in any manner, nor further cited after his statement, in consequence of his commercial journeys, and upon the assurance that he should retire in perfect freedom, has come before us a Jew, named Salomon al Ratschild, who, in spite of the infamy of his person and his Judaism, has been heard by us to this one end, to know everything concerning the conduct of the aforesaid demon. Thus he has not been required to take any oath, this Salomon, seeing that he is beyond the pale of the church, separated from us by the blood of our Saviour (*trucidatus Salvator inter nos*).

Interrogated by us as to why he appeared without the green cap upon his head, and the yellow wheel in the apparent locality of the heart in his garment, according to the ecclesiastical and royal ordinances, the said de Ratschild has exhibited to us letters-patent of dispensation granted by our lord the King, and recognized by the seneschal of Touraine and Poitou.

Then the said Jew has declared to us to have done a large business for the lady dwelling in the house of the innkeeper Tortebras, to have sold to her golden chandeliers with many branches, minutely engraved, plates of red silver, cups enriched with stones, emeralds and rubies; to have brought for her from the Levant a number of rare stuffs, Persian carpets, silks, and fine linen; in fact, things so magnificent that no

queen in Christendom could say she was so well furnished with jewels and household goods; and that he had for his part received from her three hundred thousand crowns for the rarity of the purchases in which he had been employed, such as Indian flowers, popinjays, birds' feathers, spices, Greek wines, and diamonds.

Requested by us, the judge, to say if he had furnished certain ingredients of magical conjuration, the blood of new-born children, conjuring books, and things generally and whatsoever made use of by sorcerers, giving him license to state his case without that thereupon he should be subject to any further inquest or inquiry, the said Al Ratschild has sworn by his Hebrew faith never to have had any such commerce; and has stated that he was involved in too high interests to give himself to such miseries, seeing that he was the agent of certain most powerful lords, such as the Marquis de Montserrat, the King of England, the King of Cyprus and Jerusalem, the Count of Provence, the lords of Venice, and many German gentlemen; to have belonging to him merchant galleys of all kinds, going into Egypt with the permission of the Sultan, and he trafficking in precious articles of silver and of gold, which took him often into the Exchange of Tours.

Moreover, he has declared that he considered the said lady, the subject of inquiry, to be a right loyal and natural woman, with the sweetest limbs and the smallest he has ever seen. That in consequence of her renown for a diabolical spirit, pushed by a wild imagination, and also because that he was smitten with her, he had, once that she was husbandless, proposed to her to be her gallant, to which proposition she willingly acceded. Now although from that night he long felt his bones disjointed and his bowels crushed, he had not experienced, as certain persons say, that who once yielded was free no more; he went to his fate as lead into the crucible of the alchemist.

Then the said Salomon, to whom we have granted his lib-

erty according to the safe conduct, in spite of this statement which proves abundantly his commerce with the devil, because he has been safely there where all Christians have succumbed, has submitted to us an agreement concerning the said demon.

To make known that he made an offer to the chapter of the cathedral to give for the said semblance of a woman such a ransom, if she were condemned to be burned alive, that the highest of the towers of the church of Saint-Maurice, at present in course of construction, could therewith be finished. The which we have noted to be deliberated upon at an opportune time by the assembled chapter.

And the said Salomon has taken his departure without being willing to indicate his residence, and has told us that he can be informed of the deliberation of the chapter by a Jew of the synagogue of Tours, named Tobias Nathaneus. The said Jew has before his departure been shown the African, and has recognized him as the page of the demon, and has stated the Saracens to have the custom of mutilating their slaves thus, to commit to them the task of guarding their women by an ancient usage, as it appears in the profane histories of Narsez, general of Constantinople, and others.

On the morrow after mass has appeared before us the most noble and illustrious lady of Croixmare. The same has sworn her faith in the holy Evangelists, and has related to us with tears how she had placed her eldest son beneath the earth, dead by reason of his extravagant amours with this female demon. The which noble gentleman was three-and-twenty years of age; of good complexion, very manly and well bearded, like his defunct sire. Notwithstanding his great vigor, in ninety days he had little by little withered, ruined by his commerce with the Succubus of the Rue Chaude, according to the statement of the common people; and her maternal authority over this son had been powerless.

Finally, in his latter days he appeared like a poor dried-up worm, such as housekeepers meet with in a corner when they clean out the dwelling-rooms. And always, so long as he had the strength to go, he went to shorten his life with this cursed woman ; where, also, he emptied his cash-box. When he was in his bed, and knew his last hour to be come, he swore at, cursed, and threatened and heaped upon all—his sister, his brother, and upon her his mother—a thousand insults, rebelled in the face of his chaplain ; denied God, and wished to die in damnation ; at which were much afflicted the retainers of the family, who, to save his soul and pluck it from hell, have founded two annual masses in the cathedral. And, in order to have him buried in consecrated ground, the house of Croixmare has undertaken to give to the chapter, during one hundred years, the wax-candles for the chapels and the church, upon the day of the Paschal feast.

And in conclusion, saving the wicked words heard by that reverend person, Dom Loys Pot, a nun of Marmoustiers, who came to assist in his last hours, the said Baron de Croixmare affirms never to have heard any words offered by the defunct, touching the demon who had undone him.

And therewith has retired the noble and illustrious lady in deep mourning.

In the sixth place has appeared before us, after adjournment, Jacquette, called Vieux-Oing, a kitchen scullion, going to houses to wash dishes, residing at present in the Fish Market, who, after having pledged her word to say nothing she did not hold to be true, has declared as here follows :

Namely, that one day she, being come into the kitchen of the said demon, of whom she had no fear, because she was wont to regale herself only upon males, she had the opportunity of seeing in the garden this female demon, superbly attired, walking in company with a knight, with whom she was laughing, like a natural woman. Then she had recog-

nized in this demon the true likeness of the Moorish woman placed as a nun in the convent of Notre-Dame de l'Egrignolles by the defunct seneschal of Touraine and Poitou, Messire Bruyn, Count of Roche-Corbon, the which Moorish woman had been left in the situation and place of the image of our lady the Virgin, the mother of our blessed Saviour, stolen by the Egyptians about eighteen years since.

Of this time, in consequence of the troubles come about in Touraine, no record has been kept.

This girl, aged about twelve years, was saved from the stake at which she should have been burned by being baptized; and the said defunct and his wife had then been godfather and godmother to this child of hell. Being at that time laundress at the convent, she who bears witness has remembrance of the flight which the said Egyptian took twenty months after her entry into the convent, so subtilely that it has never been known how or by what means she escaped. At that time, it was thought by all, that with the devil's aid she had flown away in the air, seeing that, notwithstanding much search, no trace of her flight was found in the convent, where everything remained in its accustomed order.

The African having been shown to the said scullion, she has declared not to have seen him before, although she was curious so to do, as he was commissioned to guard the place in which the Moorish woman combated with those whom she drained through the spigot.

In the seventh place has been brought before us Hugues du Fou, son of the Sieur de Bridoré, who, aged twenty years, has been placed in the hands of his father, under caution of his estates, and by him is represented in this process, whom it concerns if he should be duly attainted and convicted of having, assisted by several unknown and bad young men, laid siege to the jail of the archbishop and of the chapter, and of having lent himself to disturb the force of ecclesiastical

justice, by causing the escape of the demon now under consideration.

In spite of his evil disposition we have commanded the said Hugues du Fou to testify truly, touching the things he should know concerning the said demon, with whom he is vehemently reputed to have had commerce, pointing out to him that it was a question of his salvation and of the life of the said demon.

He, after having taken oath, has said :

“I swear by my eternal salvation and by the holy Evangelists here present under my hand, to hold the woman suspected of being a demon to be an angel, a perfect woman, and even more so in mind than in body, living in all honesty, full of the darling (migniard) charms and delights of love, in no way wicked, but most generous, assisting greatly the poor and suffering. I declare that I have seen her weeping veritable tears for the death of my friend the knight of Croixmare. And because on that day she had made a vow to our lady the Virgin no more to receive the love of young noblemen too weak in her service ; she has to me constantly and with great courage denied the enjoyment of her body, and has only granted to me love, and the possession of her heart, of which she has made me sovereign.

“Since this gracious gift, in spite of my increasing flame I have remained alone in her dwelling, where I have spent the greater part of my days, happy in seeing and in hearing her.

“Oh ! I would eat near her, partaking of the air which entered into her lungs, of the lights which shone in her sweet eyes, and found in this occupation more joy than have the lords of paradise. Elected by me to be forever my lady, chosen to be one day my dove, my wife, and only sweetheart, I, poor fool, have received from her no advances on the joys of the future, but, on the contrary, a thousand virtuous ad-

monitions ; such as that I should acquire renown as a good knight, become a strong man and a fine one, fear nothing except God ; honor the ladies, serve but one and love them in memory of that one ; that when I should be strengthened by the work of war, if her heart still pleased mine, at that time only would she be mine, because she would be able to wait for me, loving me so much.”

So saying, the young Sire Hugues wept, and weeping added :

“ That thinking of this graceful and feeble woman, whose arm seemed scarcely large enough to sustain the light weight of her golden chains, he did not know how to contain himself while fancying the irons which would wound her, and the miseries with which she would traitorously be loaded, and from this cause came his rebellion. And that he had license to express his sorrow before justice, because his life was so bound up with that of his delicious mistress and sweetheart that on the day when evil came to her he would surely die.”

And the said young man has vociferated a thousand other praises of the said demon, which bear witness to the vehement sorcery practiced upon him, and prove, moreover, the abominable, unalterable, and incurable life and the fraudulent witcheries to which he is at present subject, concerning which our lord the archbishop will judge, in order to save by exorcisms and penitences this young soul from the snares of hell, if the devil have not gained too strong a hold of it.

Then we have handed back the said young nobleman into the custody of the noble lord his father, after that, by the said Hugues, the African has been recognized as the servant of the accused.

In the eighth place, before us, have the footguards of our lord the archbishop led in great state the MOST HIGH AND REVEREND LADY JACQUELINE DE CHAMPCHEVRIER, ABBESS OF THE CONVENT OF NOTRE-DAME, under the invocation of Mount Carmel, to whose control had been submitted by the late seneschal of Touraine, father of Monseigneur the Count of Roche-Corbon, present advocate of the said convent, the Egyptian, named at the baptismal font Blanche Bruyn.

To the said abbess we have shortly stated the present cause, in which is involved the holy church, the glory of God, and the eternal future of the people of the diocese afflicted with a demon, and also the life of a creature who it was possible might be quite innocent. Then the cause elaborated, we have requested the said noble abbess to testify that which was within her knowledge concerning the magical disappearance of her daughter in God, Blanche Bruyn, espoused by our Saviour under the name of Sister Claire.

Then has stated the very high, very noble, and very illustrious lady abbess as follows:

“ The Sister Claire, of origin to her unknown, but suspected to be of a heretic father and mother, people inimical to God, had truly been placed in religion in the convent of which the government had canonically come to her in spite of her unworthiness; that the said sister had properly concluded her novitiate, and made her vows according to the holy rule of the order. That the vows taken, she had fallen into great sadness and had much drooped. Interrogated by her, the abbess, concerning her melancholy malady, the said sister had replied with tears that she herself did not know the cause. That one thousand and one tears engendered themselves in her at feeling no more her splendid hair upon her head; that beside this she thirsted for air, and could not resist her desire to jump up into the trees, to climb and to tumble about according to her wont during her open-air life; that she passed

her nights in tears, dreaming of the forests under the leaves of which in other days she slept ; and in remembrance of this she abhorred the quality of the air of the cloisters, which troubled her respiration ; that in her inside she was filled with evil vapors ; that at times she was inwardly diverted in church by thoughts which made her lose her countenance.

“ Then I have repeated over and over again to the poor creature the holy directions of the church, have reminded her of the eternal happiness which women without sin enjoy in paradise, and how transitory was life here below, and truly the goodness of God, who, for certain bitter pleasures lost, kept for us a love without end. In spite of this wise maternal advice the evil spirit has persisted in the said sister ; and always would she gaze upon the leaves of the trees and grass of the meadows through the windows of the church during the offices and times of prayer ; and persisted in becoming as white as linen in order that she might stay in her bed, and at certain times would run about the cloisters like a goat broken loose from its fastening.

“ Finally, she has grown thin, lost much of her great beauty, and shrunk away to nothing. While in this condition, by us, the abbess her mother, was she placed in the sick-room, we daily expecting her to die. One winter’s morning the said sister had fled, without leaving any trace of her steps, without breaking of door, forcing of locks, or opening of windows, or any sign whatever of the manner of her passage ; a frightful adventure which was believed to have taken place by aid of the demon who had annoyed and tormented her. For the rest it was settled by the authorities of the metropolitan church that the mission of this daughter of hell was to divert the nuns from their holy ways, and, blinded by their perfect lives, she had returned through the air on the wings of the sorcerer, who had left her, for mockery of our holy religion, in the place of the Virgin Mary.”

The which having said, the lady abbess was, with great honor, and according to the command of our lord the archbishop, accompanied as far as the convent of Mount Carmel.

In the ninth place, before us has come, agreeably to the citation served upon him, Joseph, called Leschalopier, a money-changer, living on the bridge at the sign of the Besant d'Or, who, after having pledged his Catholic faith to say no other thing than the truth, and that known to him, touching the process before the ecclesiastical tribunal, has testified as follows :

“I am a poor father, much afflicted by the sacred will of God. Before the coming of the Succubus of the Rue Chaude, I had, for all good, a son as handsome as a noble, learned as a clerk, and having made more than a dozen voyages into foreign lands ; for the rest a good Catholic ; keeping himself on guard against the needles of love, because he avoided marriage, knowing himself to be the support of my old days, the love of my eyes, and the constant delight of my heart. He was a son of whom the King of France might have been proud — a good and courageous man, the light of my commerce, the joy of my roof, and, above all, an inestimable blessing, seeing that I am alone in the world, having had the misfortune to lose my wife, and being too old to take another. Now, monseigneur, this treasure without equal has been taken from me, and cast into hell by the demon.

“Yes, my lord judge, directly he beheld this mischievous jade, this she-devil, in whom is a whole workshop of perdition, a conjunction of pleasure and delectation, and whom nothing can satiate, my poor child stuck himself fast in the glue-pot of love, and afterward lived only between the columns of Venus, and there did not live long, because in that place lies so great a heat that nothing can satisfy the thirst of this gulf, not even should you plunge therein the germs of the entire world.

“Alas ! then, my poor boy—his fortune, his generative

hopes, his eternal future, his entire self, more than himself, have been engulfed in this sewer, like a grain of corn in the jaws of a bull. By this means become an old orphan, I, who speak, shall have no greater joy than to see burning this demon, nourished with blood and gold—this Arachne, who has drawn out and sucked more marriages, more families in the seed, more hearts, more Christians than there are lepers in all the lazar-houses of Christendom. Burn, torment this fiend—this vampire who feeds on souls, this tigrish nature that drinks blood, this amorous lamp in which burns the venom of all the vipers. Close this abyss, the bottom of which no man can find.

“I offer my deniers to the chapter for the stake, and my arm to light the fire. Watch well, my lord judge, to surely guard this devil, seeing that she has a fire more flaming than all other terrestrial fires; she has all the fires of hell in her, the strength of Samson in her hair, and the sound of celestial music in her voice. She charms to kill the body and the soul at one stroke; she smiles to bite, she kisses to devour; in short, she would wheedle an angel, and make him deny his God.

“My son! my son! where is he at this hour? The flower of my life—a flower cut by this feminine needle-case as with scissors. Ha, my lord! why have I been called? Who will give me back my son, whose soul has been absorbed by a womb which gives death to all and life to none? The devil alone copulates and engenders not.

“This is my evidence, which I pray Master Tournebouche to write without omitting one iota, and to grant me a schedule, that I may tell it to God every evening in my prayer, to this end to make the blood of the innocent cry aloud into His ears, and to obtain from His infinite mercy the pardon of my son.”

Here followed twenty-and-seven other statements, of which

the transcription in their true objectivity, in all their quality of space, would be over-fastidious, would draw to a great length, and divert the thread of this curious process—a narrative which, according to ancient precepts, should go straight to the fact, like a bull to his principal office. Therefore here is, in a few words, the substance of these testimonies :

A great number of good Christians, townsmen and towns-women, inhabitants of the noble town of Tours, testified the demon to have held every day wedding-feasts and royal festivities, never to have been seen in any church, to have cursed God, to have mocked the priests, never to have crossed herself in any place ; to have spoken all the languages of the earth—a gift which has only been granted by God to the blessed Apostles ; to have been many times met in the fields, mounted upon an unknown animal who went before the clouds ; not to grow old, and to have always a youthful face ; to have received the father and the son on the same day, saying that her door sinned not ; to have visible malign influences which flowed from her, for that a pastry-cook, seated on a bench at his door, having perceived her one evening, received such a gust of warm love that, going in and getting to bed, he had with great passion embraced his wife, and was found dead on the morrow ; that the old men of the town went to spend the remainder of their days and of their money with her, to taste the joys of the sins of their youth, and that they died like fleas, on their bellies, and that certain of them, while dying, became black as Moors.

That this demon never allowed herself to be seen, neither at dinner, nor at breakfast, nor at supper, but ate alone, because she lived upon human brains ; that several had seen her during the night go to the cemeteries, and there embrace the young dead men, because she was not able to otherwise assuage the devil who worked in her entrails, and there raged like a tempest, and from that came the astringent biting, nitrous shooting, precipitant, and diabolical movements, squeezings,

and writhings of love and voluptuousness from which several men had emerged bruised, torn, bitten, pinched, and crushed; and that since the coming of our Saviour, who had imprisoned the master-devil in the bellies of the swine, no malignant beast had ever been seen in any portion of the earth so mischievous, so venomous, and so clutching; so much so that if one threw the town of Tours into this field of Venus, she would there transmute it into the grain of cities, and this demon would swallow it like a strawberry.

And a thousand other statements, sayings, and depositions, from which was evident in perfect clearness the infernal generation of this woman, daughter, sister, niece, spouse, or brother of the devil, beside abundant proofs of her evil-doing, and of the calamity spread by her in all families. And if it were possible to put them here comfortably with the catalogue preserved by the good man to whom is due the discovery, it would seem like a sample of the horrible cries which the Egyptians gave forth on the day of the seventh plague.

Also this examination has covered with great honor Messire Guillaume Tournebouche, by whom are quoted all the memoranda. In the tenth vacation was thus closed this inquest, arrived at a maturity of proof, furnished with authentic testimony, and sufficiently engrossed with the particulars, plaints, interdicts, contradictions, charges, assignments, withdrawals, confessions public and private, oaths, adjournments, appearances, and controversies, to which the said demon must reply.

And the townspeople say everywhere that were she really a she-devil, and furnished with internal horns planted in her nature, with which she drank the men, and broke them, this woman might swim a long time in this sea of writing before being landed safe and sound in hell.

## THE SUCCUBUS.

### II.

#### THE PROCEEDINGS TAKEN RELATIVE TO THIS FEMALE VAMPIRE.

† *In nomine Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

In the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, before us, Hiérome Cornille, grand inquisitor and ecclesiastical judge, to this canonically appointed, have appeared :

The Sire Philippe d'Idré, bailiff of the town and city of Tours and province of Touraine, living in his hôtel in the Rue de la Rotisserie, in Chateauneuf; Master Jehan Ribou, provost of the brotherhood and company of drapers, residing on the Quay de Bretaigne, at the image of St. Pierre-es-liens; Messire Antoine Jehan, alderman and chief of the brotherhood of changers, residing in the Place du Pont, at the image of St. Mark—counting-tournoise-pounds; Master Martin Beupertuys, captain of the archers of the town, residing at the castle; Jehan Rabelais, a ship's painter and boat-maker, residing at the port of the isle of St. Jacques, treasurer of the brotherhood of the mariners of the Loire; Mark Hiérome, called Maschefer, hosier, at the sign of Saint-Sébastien, president of the trades council; and Jacques, called de Villedomer, master tavern-keeper and vine-dresser, residing on the High Street, at the Pineapple; to the said Sire d'Idré, and to the said citizens, we have read the following petition, by them written, signed, and deliberated upon, to be brought under the notice of the ecclesiastical tribunal :

## PETITION.

We, the undersigned, all citizens of Tours, are come into the hôtel of his worship the Sire d'Idré, bailiff of Touraine, in the absence of our mayor, and have requested him to hear our plaints and statements concerning the following facts, which we intend to bring before the tribunal of the archbishop, the judge of ecclesiastical crimes, to whom should be referred the conduct of the cause which we here expose :

A long time ago there came into this town a wicked demon in the form of a woman, who lives in the parish of Saint-Étienne, in the house of an innkeeper, Tortebras, situated in the quit-rent of the chapter, and under the temporal jurisdiction of the archiepiscopal domain. The which foreigner carries on the business of a gay woman in a prodigal and abusive manner, and with such increase of infamy that she threatens to ruin the Catholic faith in this town, because those who go to her come back again their souls lost in every way, and refuse the assistance of the church with a thousand scandalous discourses.

Now considering that a great number of those who yielded to her are dead, and that arrived in our town with no other wealth than her beauty, she has, according to public clamor, infinite riches and right royal treasure, the acquisition of which is vehemently attributed to sorcery, or at least to robberies committed by the aid of magical attractions and her supernaturally amorous person :

Considering that it is a question of the honor and security of our families, and that never before has been seen in this country a woman wild of body or a daughter of pleasure, carrying on with such mischief her vocation of light o' love, and menacing so openly and bitterly the life, the savings, the morals, chastity, religion, and the everything of the inhabitants of this town :

Considering that there is need of an inquiry into her person, her wealth, and her deportment, in order to verify if these effects of love are legitimate, and do not proceed, as would seem indicated by her manners, from a bewitchment of Satan, who often visits Christianity under the form of a female, as appears in the holy books, in which it is stated that our blessed Saviour was carried away into a mountain, from which Lucifer or Astaroth showed him the fertile domains of Judæa ; and that in many places have been seen succubi or demons having the faces of women, who, not wishing to return to hell, and having within them an insatiable fire, attempt to refresh and sustain themselves by sucking in souls :

Considering that in the case of the said woman a thousand proofs of *diablerie* are met with, of which certain inhabitants speak openly, and that it is necessary for the repose of the said woman that the matter be sifted, in order that she shall not be attacked by certain people, ruined by the result of her wickedness :

For these causes we pray that it will please you to submit to our spiritual lord, father of this diocese, the most noble and blessed Archbishop Jehan de Monsoreau, the troubles of his afflicted flock, to the end that he may advise upon them.

By so doing you will fulfill the duties of your office, as we do those of preservers of the security of this town, each one according to the things of which he has charge in his locality.

And we have signed the present, in the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, on All-Saints' Day, after mass.

Master Tournebouche having finished the reading of this petition, by us, Hiérome Cornille, has it been said to the petitioners :

“ Gentlemen, do you, at the present time, persist in these statements ? have you proofs other than those come within our own knowledge. and do you undertake to maintain the

truth of this before God, before man, and before the accused?"

All, with the exception of Master Jehan Rabelais, have persisted in their belief, and the aforesaid Rabelais has withdrawn from the process, saying that he considered the said Moorish woman to be a natural woman and a good wench, who had no other fault than that of keeping up a very high temperature of love;

Then we, the judge appointed, have, after mature deliberation, found matter upon which to proceed in the petition of the aforesaid citizens, and have commanded that the woman at present in the jail of the chapter shall be proceeded against by all legal methods, as written in the canons and ordinances, *contra dæmonios*. The said ordonnance, embodied in a writ, shall be published by the town-crier in all parts, and with the sound of a trumpet, in order to make it known to all, and that each witness may, according to his knowledge, be confronted with the said demon, and finally the said accused to be provided with a defender, according to custom, and the interrogations, and the process to be congruously conducted.

(Signed) HIÉRÔME CORNILLE

And, lower down,

## TOURNEBOUCHE.

¶ *In nomine Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

In the year of our Lord one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, the 10th day of February, after mass, by command of us, Hiérome Cornille, ecclesiastical judge, has been brought from the jail of the chapter and led before us the woman taken in the house of the innkeeper Tortebras, situated in the domain of the chapter and the cathedral of St. Maurice, and thus subject to the temporal and seigneurial justice of the archbishop of Tours; beside which, in conse-

quence of the nature of the crimes imputed to her, she is liable to the tribunal and council of ecclesiastical justice, the which we have made known to her, to the end that she should not ignore it.

And after a serious reading, entirely and well understood by her, in the first place of the petition of the town; then of the statements, plaints, accusations, and proceedings which were written in twenty-four quires by Master Tournebouche, and are above related, we have, with the invocation and assistance of God and the church, resolved to ascertain the truth, first by interrogatories made to the said accused.

In the first interrogation we have requested the aforesaid to inform us in what land or town she had been born.

By her who speaks was it answered: "In Mauritania."

We have then inquired: "If she had a father or a mother, or any relations?"

By her who speaks has it been replied: "That she had never known them."

By us requested to declare her name.

By her who speaks has been replied: "Zulma," in the Arabian tongue.

By us has it been demanded: "Why she spoke our language?"

By her who speaks has it been said: "Because she had come into this country."

By us has it been asked: "At what time?"

By her who speaks has it been replied: "About twelve years."

By us has it been asked: "What age she then was?"

By her who speaks has it been answered: "Fifteen years or thereabout."

By us has it been said: "Then you acknowledge yourself to be twenty-seven years of age?"

By her who speaks has it been replied: "Yes."

By us has it been said to her: "That she was then the

Moorish child found in the niche of madame the Virgin, baptized by the archbishop, held at the font by the late Lord of Roche-Carbon and the Lady of Azay, his wife, afterward by them placed in religion at the convent of Mount Carmel, where by her had been made vows of chastity, poverty, silence, and the love of God, under the divine assistance of St. Claire?"

By her who speaks has it been said: "That is true."

By us has it been asked her: "If, then, she allowed to be true the declarations of the very noble and illustrious lady, the abbess of Mount Carmel, also the statement of Jacquette, called Vieux-Oing, being kitchen scullion?"

By the accused has it been answered: "These words are true in a great measure."

Then by us has it been said to her: "Then you are a Christian?"

And by her who speaks has been answered: "Yes, my father."

Then by us has she been requested to make the sign of the cross, and to take holy water from a brush placed by Master Tournebouche in her hand; the which having done, and by us having been witnessed, it has been admitted as an indisputable fact that Zulma, the Moorish woman, called in our country Blanche Bruyn, a nun of the convent under the invocation of Mount Carmel, there named Sister Claire, and suspected to be the false appearance of a woman under which is concealed a demon, has in our presence made act of religion, and thus recognized the justice of the ecclesiastical tribunal.

Then by us have these words been said to her: "My daughter, you are vehemently suspected to have had recourse to the devil from the manner in which you left the convent, which was supernatural in every way."

By her who speaks has it been stated, that she at that time gained naturally the fields by the street door after vespers, enveloped in the robes of Jehan de Marsilis, visitor of the

convent, who had hidden her, the person speaking, in a little hovel belonging to him, situated in the Cupidon Lane, near a tower in the town. That there this said priest had to her then speaking, at great length and most thoroughly, taught the delights of love, of which she then speaking was before in all points ignorant, for which delights she had a great taste, finding them of good use. That the Sieur d'Amboise, having perceived her then speaking at the window of this retreat, had been smitten with a great love for her. Then she, loving him more heartily than the monk, has fled from the hovel where she was detained for profit of his pleasure by Don Marsilis. And then she has gone in great haste to Amboise, the castle of the said lord, where she had had a thousand pastimes, hunting, and dancing, and beautiful dresses fit for a queen.

One day the Sieur de la Roche-Pozay having been invited by the Sieur d'Amboise to come and feast and enjoy himself, the Baron d'Amboise had allowed him to see her, then speaking, as she came out naked from her bath. That at this sight the said Sieur de la Roche-Pozay, having fallen violently in love with her, had on the morrow discomfited in single combat the Sieur d'Amboise, and by great violence had, in spite of her tears, taken her to the Holy Land, where she, who was speaking, had led the life of a woman well beloved, and been held in much respect on account of her great beauty.

That after numerous adventures, she, who was speaking, returned into this country in spite of her apprehensions of misfortune, because such was the will of her lord and master, the Baron de Bueil, who was dying of grief in Asiatic lands, and desired to return to his patrimonial manor. Now he had promised, her who was speaking, to preserve her from all peril. Now she, who was speaking, had faith and belief in him, the more so as she loved him very much ; but on his arrival in this country the Sieur de Bueil was seized with an illness, and died deplorably, without taking any remedies, in spite of the fer-

vent requests which she who was speaking had addressed to him, but without success, because he hated physicians, master-surgeons, and apothecaries ; and that this was the whole truth.

Then by us has it been said to the accused that she then held to be true the statements of the good Sieur Harduin and of the innkeeper Tortebras.

By her who speaks has it been replied, that she recognized as evidence the greater part, and also as malicious, calumnious, and imbecile certain portions.

Then by us has the accused been required to declare if she had had pleasure and carnal commerce with all the men, nobles, citizens, and others as set forth in the plaints and declarations of the inhabitants.

To which by her who speaks has it been answered with great effrontery: “Pleasure, yes ! Commerce, I do not know.”

By us has it been said to her, that all had died by her acts.

By her who speaks has it been said that their deaths could not be the result of her acts, because she had always refused herself to them, and the more she fled from them the more they came and embraced her with infinite passion, and that when she who was speaking was taken by them she gave herself up to them with all her strength, by the grace of God, because she had in that more joy than in any other thing ; and has stated, she who speaks, that she avows her secret sentiments solely because she has been requested by us to state the whole truth, and that she the speaker stood in great fear of the torments of the torturers.

Then by us has she been requested to answer, under pain of torture, in what state of mind she was when a young nobleman died in consequence of his commerce with her.

Then by her speaking has it been replied, that she remained quite melancholy and wished to destroy herself ; and prayed God, the Virgin, and the saints to receive her in Paradise, because never had she met with any but lovely and good

hearts in which was no guile, and beholding them die she fell into great sadness, fancying herself to be an evil creature or subject to an evil fate, which she communicated like the plague.

Then by us has she been requested to state where she paid her orisons.

By her speaking has it been said that she prayed in her oratory on her knees before God, who, according to the Evangelist, sees and hears all things and resides in all places.

Then by us has it been demanded why she never frequented the churches, the offices, nor the feasts.

To this by her speaking has it been answered, that those who came to love her had elected the feast-days for that purpose, and that she speaking did all things to their liking.

By us has it been remonstrated that, by so doing, she was submissive to man rather than to the blessed commandments of God.

Then by her speaking has it been stated, that for those who loved her well she speaking would have thrown herself into a flaming pile, never having followed in her love any course but that of nature, and that for the weight of the world in gold she would not have lent her body or her love to a king, who did not love her with his heart, feet, head, hair, forehead, and all over. In short and moreover, the speaker had never made act of harlotry in selling one single grain of love to a man whom she had not chosen to be hers, and that he who had held her in his arms one hour or kissed her on the mouth a little, possessed her for the rest of her days.

Then by us has she been requested to state whence proceeded the jewels, gold plate, silver, precious stones, regal furniture, carpets, *et cetera*, worth 200,000 doubloons, according to the inventory found in her residence and placed in the custody of the treasurer of the chapter.

By the speaker answer has been made, that in us she placed all her hopes, even as much as in God, but that she dare not

reply to this, because it involved the sweetest things of love upon which she had always lived.

And interpolated anew, the speaker has said that if we the judge knew with what fervor she held him she loved, with what obedience she followed him in good or evil ways, with what study she submitted to him, with what happiness she listened to his desires, and inhaled the sacred words with which his mouth gratified her, in what adoration she held his person, even we, an old judge, would believe, with her well-beloved, that no sum could pay for this great affection which all the men ran after. And the speaker has declared never, from any man loved by her, to have solicited any present or gift, and that she rested perfectly contented to live in their hearts, that she would there curl herself up with indestructible and ineffable pleasure, finding herself richer with this heart than with anything, and thinking of no other thing than to give them more pleasure and happiness than she received from them. But in spite of the iterated refusals of the speaker her lovers persisted in graciously rewarding her. At times one came to her with a necklace of pearls, saying:

“This is to show my darling that the satin of her skin did not falsely appear to me whiter than pearls;” and would put it on the speaker’s neck, kissing her lovingly.

The speaker would be angry at these follies, but could not refuse to keep a jewel that gave them pleasure to see it there where they placed it. Each one had a different fancy.

At times another liked to tear the precious garments which the speaker wore to gratify him; and another to deck out the speaker with sapphires on her arms, on her legs, on her neck, and in her hair; another to seat her on the carpet robed in silk, or black velvet, and to remain for days together in ecstasy at the perfections of the speaker, to whom the things desired by her lovers gave infinite pleasure, because these things rendered them quite happy. And the speaker has said, that as we love nothing so much as our pleasure, and wish that

everything should shine in beauty and harmonize, outside as well as inside the heart, so they all wished to see the place inhabited by the speaker adorned with the handsomest objects, and from this idea all her lovers were pleased as much as she was in spreading thereabout gold, silks, and flowers.

Now seeing that these lovely things spoil nothing, the speaker had no force or commandment by which to prevent a knight, or even a rich citizen beloved by her, having his will, and thus found herself constrained to receive rare perfumes and other satisfactions with which the speaker was loaded, and that such was the source of the gold plate, carpets, and jewels seized at her house by the officers of justice.

This terminates the first interrogation made to the said Sister Claire, suspected to be a demon, because we the judge and Guillaume Tournebouche are greatly fatigued with having the voice of the aforesaid in our ears, and find our understanding in every way muddled.

By us the judge has the second interrogatory been appointed, three days from to-day, in order that the proofs of the possession and presence of the demon in the body of the aforesaid may be sought, and the accused, according to the order of the judge, has been taken back to the jail, under the conduct of Master Guillaume Tournebouche.

† *In nomine Patris, et Fili, et Spiritus Sancti. Amen.*

On the thirteenth day following of the said month of February, before us, Hiérome Cornille, *et cætera*, has been produced the Sister Claire above mentioned, in order to be interrogated upon the facts and deeds to her imputed, and of them to be convicted.

By us, the judge, has it been said to the accused that, looking at the diverse responses by her given to the preceding interrogatories, it was certain that it never had been in the power of a simple woman, even if she were authorized, if such

license were allowed, to lead the life of a loose woman, to give pleasure to all, to cause so many deaths, and to accomplish sorceries so perfect, without the assistance of a special demon lodged in her body, and to whom her soul had been sold by an especial compact. That it had been clearly demonstrated that under her outward appearance lives and moves a demon, the author of these evils, and that she was now called upon to declare at what age she had received this demon, to avow the agreement existing between herself and him, and to tell the truth concerning their common evil doings.

By the speaker was it replied that she would answer us, man, as to God, who, at the last day, should be the judge of all of us.

Then hath the speaker pretended never to have seen the demon, neither to have spoken with him, nor in any way to desire to see him; never to have led the life of a courtesan, because she, the speaker, had never practiced the various delights that love invents, other than those furnished by the pleasure which the Sovereign Creator has put in the thing, and to have always been incited more from the desire of being sweet and good to the dear lord loved by her, than by an incessantly raging desire. But if such had been her inclination, the speaker begged us to bear in mind that she was a poor African girl, in whom God had placed very hot blood, and in her brain so easy an understanding of the delights of love, that if a man only looked at her she felt greatly moved in her heart.

That if from desire of acquaintance an amorous gentleman touched the speaker on any portion of the body, there passing his hand, she was, in spite of everything, under his power, because her heart failed her instantly. By this touch, the apprehension and remembrance of all the sweet joys of love woke again in her breast, and there caused an intense heat, which mounted up, flamed in her veins, and made her love and joy

from head to foot. And since the day when Don Marsilius had first awakened the understanding of the speaker concerning these things, she had never had any other thought, and thenceforth recognized love to be a thing so perfectly concordant with her nature, that it had since been proved to the speaker that in default of love and natural relief she would have died, withered, at the said convent.

As evidence of which, the speaker affirms as a certainty, that after her flight from the said convent she had not passed a single day or one particle of time in melancholy and sadness, but always was she joyous, and thus followed the sacred will of God, which she believed to have been diverted during the time lost by her in the convent.

To this was it objected by us, Hiérome Cornille, to the said demon, that in response she had openly blasphemed against God, because we had all been made to His greater glory, and placed in the world to honor and to serve Him, to have before our eyes His blessed commandments, and to live in sanctity, in order to gain eternal life, and not to be always in bed, doing that which even the beasts only do at a certain time.

Then by the said sister has answer been made, that she honored God greatly, that in all countries she had taken care of the poor and suffering, giving them both money and raiment, and that at the last judgment-day she hoped to have around her a goodly company of holy works pleasant to God, which would intercede for her. That but for her humility, a fear of being reproached and of displeasing the gentlemen of the chapter, she would with joy have spent her wealth in finishing the cathedral of St. Maurice, and there have established foundations for the welfare of her soul—would have spared therein neither her pleasure nor her person, and that with this idea she would have taken double pleasure in her nights, because each one of her amours would have added a stone to the building of this basilica. Also the more for this purpose, and

for the eternal welfare of the speaker, would they have right heartily given their wealth.

Then by us has it been said to this demon that she could not justify the fact of her sterility, because in spite of so much commerce no child had been born of her, the which proved the presence of a demon in her. Moreover, Astaroth alone, or an apostle, could speak all languages, and she spoke after the manner of all countries, the which proved the presence of the devil in her.

Thereupon the speaker has asked : “ In what consisted the said diversity of languages ? ”—that of Greek she knew nothing save *Kyrie eleison*, of which she made great use ; of Latin, nothing save *Amen*, which she said to God, wishing therewith to obtain her liberty. That for the rest the speaker had felt great sorrow, being without children, and if the good wives had them, she believed it was because they took so little pleasure in the business, and she, the speaker, a little too much. But that such was doubtless the will of God, who thought that from too great happiness the world would be in danger of perishing.

Taking this into consideration, and a thousand other reasons, which sufficiently establish the presence of a devil in the body of the sister, because the peculiar property of Lucifer is to always find heretical arguments having the semblance of truth, we have ordered that in our presence the torture be applied to the said accused, and that she be well tormented, in order to reduce the said demon by suffering to submit to the authority of the church, and have requested to render us assistance one Francois de Hangest, master-surgeon and doctor to the chapter, charging him by a codicil hereunder written to investigate the qualities of the feminine nature (*virtutes vulvæ*) of the above-mentioned woman, to enlighten our religion upon the methods employed by this demon to lay hold of souls in that way, and to see if any artifice was there apparent.

Then the said Moorish woman has wept bitterly, tortured

in advance, and, in spite of her irons, has knelt down, imploring with cries and clamor the revocation of this order, objecting that her limbs were in such a feeble state, and her bones so tender, that they would break like glass; and finally, has offered to purchase her freedom from this by the gift of all her goods to the chapter, and to quit incontinently the country.

Upon this, by us has she been required to voluntarily declare herself to be, and to have always been, a demon of the nature of a Succubus, which is a female devil whose business it is to corrupt Christians by the blandishments and flagitious delights of love.

To this the speaker has replied that the affirmation would be an abominable falsehood, seeing that she had always felt herself to be a most natural woman.

Then her irons being struck off by the torturer, the aforesaid has removed her dress, and has maliciously and with evil design bewildered and attacked our understandings with the sight of her body, the which, for a fact, exercises upon a man supernatural coercion.

Master Guillaume Tournebouche has, by reason of nature, quitted the pen at this period, and retired, objecting that he was unable, without incredible temptations, which worked in his brain, to be a witness of this torture, because he felt the devil violently gaining his person.

This finishes the second interrogatory; and as the apparitor and janitor of the chapter have stated Master François de Hangest to be in the country, the torture and interrogations are appointed for to-morrow at the hour of noon, after mass.

This has been written verbally by me, Hiérome, in the absence of Master Guillaume Tournebouche, on whose behalf it is signed.

HIÉROME CORNILLE,  
Grand Inquisitor.

## PETITION.

To-day, the fourteenth day of the month of February, in the presence of me, Hiérome Cornille, have appeared the said Masters Jehan Ribou, Antoine Jahan, Martin Beaupertuys, Hiérome Maschefer, Jacques de Ville d'Omer, and the Sieur d'Idré, in place of the mayor of the city of Tours, for the time absent—all plaintiffs designated in the act of process made at the Town Hall, to whom we have, at the request of Blanche Bruyn (now confessing herself a nun of the convent of Mount Carmel, under the name of Sister Claire), declared the appeal made to the judgment of God by the said person accused of demoniacal possession, and her offer to pass through the ordeal of water and of fire, in presence of the chapter and of the town of Tours, in order to prove her reality as a woman and her innocence.

To this request have agreed, for their parts, the said accusers, who, on condition that the town is security for it, have engaged to prepare a suitable place and a pile, to be approved by the godparents of the accused.

Then by us, the judge, has the first day of the new year been appointed for the day of ordeal—which will be next Paschal day—and we have indicated the hour of noon, after mass, each of the parties having acknowledged this delay to be sufficient.

And the present proclamation shall be cried, at the suit of each of them, in all the towns, boroughs, and castles of Touraine and the land of France, at their request and at their cost and suit.

HIÉROME CORNILLE.

## THE SUCCUBUS.

### III.

#### WHAT THE SUCCUBUS DID TO SUCK OUT THE SOUL OF THE OLD JUDGE, AND WHAT CAME OF THE DIABOLICAL DELECTATION.

*This is the act of extreme confession made the first day of the month of March, in the year one thousand two hundred and seventy-one, after the coming of our blessed Saviour, by Hierome Cornille, priest, canon of the chapter of the cathedral of St. Maurice, grand inquisitor, of all acknowledging himself unworthy, who, finding his last hour to be come, and contrite of his sins, evil doings, forfeits, bad deeds, and wickednesses, has desired his avowal to be published to serve the preconization of the truth, the glory of God, the justice of the tribunal, and to be an alleviation to him of his punishment, in the other world.*

*The said Hierome Cornille being on his death-bed, there have been convoked to hear his declarations, Jehan de la Haye (de Haga), vicar of the church of St. Maurice; Pietro Guyard, treasurer of the Chapter, appointed by our lord Jehan de Monsoreau, archbishop, to write his words; and Don Louis Pot, a monk of maius MONASTERIUM (Marmoustier), chosen by him for a spiritual father and confessor; all three assisted by the great and illustrious Doctor Guillaume de Censoris, Roman arch-deacon, at present sent into our diocese (LEGATUS) by our holy father the pope; and, finally, in presence of a great number of Christians come to be witnesses of the death of the said Hierome Cornille, upon his known wish to make act of public repentance, seeing that he was fast sinking, and that his words might open the eyes of Christians about to fall into hell.*

And before him, Hiérome, who, by reason of his great weakness, could not speak, has Don Louis Pot, read the following confession, to the great agitation of the said company :

“ My brethren, until the seventy-first year of my age, which is the one in which I now am; with the exception of the little sins through which, all holy though he be, a Christian renders himself culpable before God, but which it is allowed to us to repurchase by penitence, I believe I led a Christian life, and merited the praise and renown bestowed upon me in this diocese, where I was raised to the high office of grand inquisitor, of which I am unworthy. Now, struck with the knowledge of the infinite glory of God, horrified at the agonies which await the wicked and prevaricators in hell, I have thought to lessen the enormity of my sins by the greatest penitence I can show in the extreme hour at which I am.

“ Thus I have prayed of the church, whom I have deceived and betrayed, whose rights and judicial renown I have sold, to grant me the opportunity of accusing myself publicly in the manner of the ancient Christians. I hoped, in order to show my great repentance, to have still enough life in me to be reviled at the door of the cathedral by all my brethren, to remain there an entire day on my knees, holding a candle, a cord round my neck, and my feet naked, seeing that I had followed the ways of hell with regard to the sacred instincts of the church. But in this great shipwreck of my fragile virtue, which will be to you a warning to fly from vice and the snares of the demon, and to take refuge in the church, where all help is, I have been so bewitched by Lucifer that our Saviour Jesus Christ will take, by the intercession of all you whose help and prayers I request, pity on me, a poor abused Christian, whose eyes now stream with tears. So would I have another life to spend in works of penitence. Now, then, listen and tremble with great fear !

“ Elected by the assembled chapter to carry out, instruct,

and complete the process commenced against a demon, who had appeared in a feminine shape, in the person of a relapsed nun—an abominable person, denying God, and bearing the name of Zulma in the infidel country whence she comes; the which devil is known in the diocese under that of Claire, of the convent of Mount Carmel, and has much afflicted the town by putting herself under an infinite number of men to gain their souls to Mammon, Astaroth, and Satan—princes of hell—by making them leave this world in a state of mortal sin, and causing their death where life has its source, I have, I the judge, fallen in my latter days into this snare, and have lost my senses, while acquitting myself traitorously of the functions committed with great confidence by the chapter to my cold senility.

“Hear how subtle the demon is, and stand firm against her artifices.

“While listening to the first response of the aforesaid Succubus, I saw with horror that the irons placed upon her feet and hands left no mark there, and was astonished at her hidden strength and at her apparent weakness. Then my mind was troubled suddenly at the sight of the natural perfections with which the devil was endowed. I listened to the music of her voice, which warmed me from head to foot, and made me desire to be young, to give myself up to this demon, thinking that for an hour passed in her company my eternal salvation was but poor payment for the pleasure of love tasted in those slender arms. Then I lost that firmness with which all judges should be furnished. This demon by me questioned, reasoned with me in such a manner that at the second interrogatory I was firmly persuaded I should be committing a crime in fining and torturing a poor little creature who cried like an innocent child. Then, warned by a voice from on high to do my duty, and that these golden words, this music of celestial appearance, were diabolical mummeries, that this body, so pretty, so infatuating, would transmute itself into a bristly beast with

sharp claws, those eyes so soft into flames of hell, her behind into a scaly tail, her pretty rosebud mouth and gentle lips into the jaws of a crocodile, I came back to my intention of having the said Succubus tortured until she avowed her mission, as this practice had already been followed in Christianity.

“Now when this demon showed herself stripped to me, to be put to the torture, I was suddenly placed in her power by magical conjurations. I felt my old bones crack, my brain received a warm light, my heart transhipped young and boiling blood. I was light in myself, and by virtue of the magic philter thrown into my eyes the snows of my forehead melted away. I lost all conscience of my Christian life, and found myself a schoolboy, running about the country, escaped from class and stealing apples.

“I had not the power to make the sign of the cross, neither did I remember the church, God the Father, nor the sweet Saviour of men. A prey to this design, I went about the streets thinking over the delights of that voice, the abominable, pretty body of this demon, and saying a thousand wicked things to myself. Then, pierced and drawn by a blow of the devil’s fork, who had planted himself already in my head as a serpent in an oak, I was conducted by this sharp prong toward the jail, in spite of my guardian angel, who from time to time pulled me by the arm and defended me against these temptations, but in spite of his holy advice and his assistance I was dragged by a million claws stuck into my heart, and soon found myself in the jail.

“As soon as the door was opened to me I saw no longer any appearance of a prison, because the Succubus had there, with the assistance of evil genii or fays, constructed a pavilion of purple and silk, full of perfumes and flowers, where she was seated, superbly attired, with neither irons on her neck nor chains on her feet. I allowed myself to be stripped of my ecclesiastical vestments, and was put into a scent-bath. Then the demon covered me with a Saracen robe, entertained me





*THE SUCCUBUS.*



with a repast of rare viands contained in precious vases, gold cups, Asiatic wines, songs, and marvelous music, and a thousand sweet sounds that tickled my soul by means of my ears. At my side kept always the said Succubus, and her sweet, detestable embrace instilled new ardor into my members. My guardian angel quitted me. Then I lived only by the terrible light of the Moorish woman's eyes, coveted the warm embraces of the delicate body, wished always to feel her red lips, that I believed natural, and had no fear of the bite of those teeth which draw one to the bottom of hell. I delighted to feel the unequaled softness of her hands without thinking that they were unnatural claws. In short, I acted like a husband desiring to go to his affianced, without thinking that that spouse was everlasting death.

"I had no thought for the things of this world nor the interests of God, dreaming only of love, of the sweet breasts of this woman, who made me burn, and of the gate of hell in which I wished to cast myself. Alas! my brethren, during three days and three nights was I thus constrained to toil without being able to stop the stream which flowed from my reins, in which were plunged, like two pikes, the hands of the Succubus, which communicated to my poor old age and my dried up bones, I know not what sweat of love.

"At first this demon, to draw me to her, caused to flow in my inside the softness of milk, then came poignant joys which pricked like a hundred needles my bones, my marrow, my brain, and my nerves. Then all this gone, all things became inflamed, my head, my blood, my nerves, my flesh, my bones, and then I burned with the real fire of hell, which caused me torments in my joints, and an incredible, intolerable, tearing voluptuousness which loosened the bonds of life. The tresses of this demon, which enveloped my poor body, poured upon me a stream of flame, and I felt each look like a bar of red iron. During this mortal delectation I saw the ardent face of the said Succubus, who laughed and addressed to me a thou-

sand exciting words ; such as that I was her knight, her lord, her lance, her day, her joy, her hero, her life, her good, her rider, and that she would like to clasp me even closer, wishing to be in my skin or have me in hers. Hearing which, under the prick of this tongue which sucked out my soul, I plunged and precipitated myself finally into hell without finding the bottom.

“And then when I had no more a drop of blood in my veins, when my heart no longer beat in my body, and I was ruined at all points, the demon, still fresh, white, rubicund, glowing, and laughing, said to me :

“‘Poor fool, to think me a demon ! Had I asked thee to sell me thy soul for a kiss, wouldst thou not give it me with all thy heart ?’

“‘Yes,’ said I.

“‘And if always to act thus it were necessary for thee to nourish thyself with the blood of new-born children, in order always to have new life to spend in my arms, would you not imbibe it willingly ?’

“‘Yes,’ said I.

“‘And to be always my gallant horseman, gay as a man in his prime, feeling life, drinking pleasure, plunging to the depths of joy as a swimmer into the Loire, wouldst thou not deny God, wouldst thou not spit in the face of Jesus ?’

“‘Yes,’ said I.

“‘If twenty years of monastic life could yet be given thee, wouldst thou not forfeit them for two years of this love which burns thee, and to be at this sweet occupation ?’

“‘Yes,’ said I.

“Then I felt a hundred sharp claws which tore my diaphragm as if the beaks of a thousand birds there took their bellyfuls, shrieking. Then I was lifted suddenly above the earth upon the said Succubus, who had spread her wings, and cried to me :

“‘Ride, ride, my gallant rider ! Hold yourself firmly on

the back of thy mule, by her mane, by her neck ; and ride, ride, my gallant rider—everything rides ! '

"And then I saw, as a thick fog, the cities of the earth, where by a special gift I perceived each one coupled with a female demon, and tossing about, engendering in great concupiscence, all shrieking a thousand words of love and exclamations of all kinds, and all toiling away with ecstasy. Then my horse with the Moorish head pointed out to me, still flying and galloping beyond the clouds, the earth coupled with the sun in a conjunction, from which proceeded a germ of stars, and there each female world was embracing a male world ; but in place of the words used by creatures, the worlds were giving forth the howl of tempests, throwing out lightnings, and crying thunders. Then still rising, I saw overhead the female nature of all things in love with the Prince of Movement. Now, by way of mockery, the Succubus placed me in the centre of this horrible and perpetual conflict, where I was lost as a grain of sand in the sea. Then still cried my white mare to me :

" ' Ride, ride, my gallant rider—all things ride ! '

"Now, thinking how little was a priest in this torrent of the seed of worlds, nature always clasped together, and metals, stones, waters, air, thunders, fish, plants, animals, men, spirits, worlds, and planets, all embracing with fury, I denied the Catholic faith. Then the Succubus, pointing out to me the great patch of stars seen in the heavens, said to me :

" ' That milky way is a drop of celestial seed escaped from the great flow of the worlds in conjunction.'

"Thereupon I instantly clasped the Succubus with passion by the light of a thousand million of stars, and I wished in clasping her to feel the nature of those thousand million of creatures. Then by this great effort of love I fell impotent in every way, and heard a great infernal laugh. Then I found myself in my bed, surrounded by my servitors, who had had the courage to struggle with the demon, throwing into the bed where I was stretched a basin full of holy water, and

saying fervent prayers to God. Then had I to sustain, in spite of this assistance, a horrible combat with the said Succubus, whose claws still clutched my heart, causing me infinite pains; still, while reanimated by the voice of my servitors, relations, and friends, I tried to make the sacred sign of the cross; the Succubus perched on my bed, on the bolster, at the foot, everywhere occupying herself in distracting my nerves, laughing, grimacing, putting before my eyes a thousand obscene images, and causing me a thousand wicked desires.

“ Nevertheless, taking pity on me, my lord the archbishop caused the relics of St. Gatien to be brought, and the moment the shrine had touched my bed the said Succubus was obliged to depart, leaving an odor of sulphur and of hell, which made the throats of my servants, friends, and others sore for a whole day. Then the celestial light of God having enlightened my soul, I knew that I was, through my sins and my combat with the evil spirit, in great danger of dying. Then did I implore the especial mercy, to live just a little time to render glory to God and to His church, objecting the infinite merits of Jesus dead upon the cross for the salvation of Christians. By this prayer I obtained the favor of recovering sufficient strength to accuse myself of my sins, and to beg of the members of the church of St. Maurice their aid and assistance to deliver me from purgatory, where I am about to atone for my faults by infinite agonies.

“ Finally, I declare that my proclamation, wherein the said demon appeals to the judgment of God by the ordeals of holy water and of fire, is a subterfuge due to an evil design suggested by the said demon, who would thus have had the power to escape the justice of the tribunal of the archbishop and of the chapter, seeing that she secretly confessed to me to be able to make another demon accustomed to the ordeal appear in her place.

“ And, in conclusion, I give and bequeath to the chapter

of the church of St. Maurice my property of all kinds, to found a chapter in the said church, to build it and adorn it and put it under the invocation of St. Hiérome and St. Gatien, of whom the one is my patron and the other the saviour of my soul."

This, heard by all the company, has been brought to the notice of the ecclesiastical tribunal by Jehan de la Haye (Johannes de Haga).

We, Jehan de la Haye (Johannes de Haga), elected grand inquisitor of St. Maurice by the general assembly of the chapter, according to the usage and custom of that church, and appointed to pursue afresh the trial of the demon Succubus, at present in the jail of the chapter, have ordered a new inquest, at the which will be heard all those of this diocese having cognizance of the facts relative thereto. We declare void the other proceedings, interrogations, and decrees, and annul them in the name of the members of the church in general, and sovereign chapter assembled, and declare that the appeal to God, traitorously made by the demon, shall not take place, in consequence of the notorious treachery of the devil in this affair. And the said judgment shall be cried by sound of trumpet in all parts of the diocese in which have been published the false edicts of the preceding month, all notoriously due to the instigations of the demon, according to the confession of the late Hiérome Cornille.

Let all good Christians be of assistance to our holy church, and to her commandments.

JEHAN DE LA HAYE.

## THE SUCCUBUS.

### IV.

HOW THE MOORISH WOMAN OF THE RUE  
CHAUDE TWISTED ABOUT SO BRISKLY THAT  
WITH GREAT DIFFICULTY WAS SHE BURNED  
AND COOKED ALIVE, TO THE GREAT LOSS  
OF THE INFERNAL REGIONS.

This was written in the month of May, of the year 1360,  
after the manner of a testament.

“ My very dear and well-beloved son, when it shall be lawful for thee to read this I shall be, I, thy father, reposing in the tomb, imploring thy prayers, and supplicating thee to conduct thyself in life as it will be commanded thee in this re-script, bequeathed for the good government of thy family, thy future, and safety ; for I have done this at a period when I had my senses and understanding, still recently affected by the sovereign injustice of men.

“ In my virile age I had a great ambition to raise myself in the church, and therein to attain the highest dignities, because no life appeared to me more splendid. Now with this earnest idea, I learned to read and write, and with great trouble became in a fit condition to enter the clergy. But because I had no protection, or good advice to superintend my training, I had an idea of becoming the writer, tabellion, and rubrican of the chapter of St. Maurice, in which were the highest and richest personages of Christendom, since the King of France is only therein a simple canon. Now there I should be able better than elsewhere to find services to render to certain lords, and thus to find a master or gain patronage, and by this as-

sistance enter into religion, and be mitred and ensconced in an archiepiscopal chair, somewhere or other.

“ But this first vision was over-credulous, and a little too ambitious, the which God caused me clearly to perceive by the sequel. In fact, Messire Jehan de Villedomer, who afterward became cardinal, was given this appointment, and I was rejected, discomfited. Now in this unhappy hour I received an alleviation of my troubles, by the advice of the good old Hiérome Cornille, of whom I have often spoken to you. This dear man induced me, by his kindness, to become penman to the chapter of St. Maurice and the archbishop of Tours, the which offer I accepted with joy, since I was reputed a good scrivener. At the time I was about to enter into the presbytery commenced the famous process against the devil of the Rue Chaude, of which the old folk still talk, and which, in its time, has been recounted in every home in France. Now, believing that it would be of great advantage to my ambition, and that for this assistance the chapter would raise me to some dignity, my good master had me appointed for the purpose of writing all that should be in this grave cause, subject to writing.

“ At the very outset Monseigneur Hiérome Cornille, a man approaching eighty years, of great sense, justice, and sound understanding, suspected some spitefulness in this cause, although he was not partial to immodest girls, and had never been involved with a woman in his life, and was holy and venerable, with a sanctity which had caused him to be selected as judge, all this notwithstanding. As soon as the depositions were completed, and the poor wench heard, it remained clear that although this merry doxy had broken her religious vows, she was innocent of all devilry, and that her great wealth was coveted by her enemies, and other persons, whom I must not name to thee for reasons of prudence.

“ At this time every one believed her to be so well furnished with silver and gold that she could have bought the whole

county of Touraine, if so it had pleased her. A thousand falsehoods and calumnious words concerning this girl, envied by all the honest women, were circulated and believed in as gospel.

“At this period Master Hiérome Cornille, having ascertained that no demon other than that of love was in this girl, made her consent to remain in a convent for the remainder of her days. And having ascertained from certain noble knights, brave in war and rich in domains, that they would do everything to save her, he invited her secretly to demand of her accusers the judgment of God, at the same time giving her goods to the chapter, in order to silence mischievous tongues. By this means would be saved from the stake the most delicate flower that ever heaven has allowed to fall upon our earth ; the which flower yielded only from excessive tenderness and amiability to the malady of love, cast by her eyes into the hearts of all her pursuers. But the real devil, under the form of a monk, mixed himself up in this affair ; in this wise :

“A great enemy of the virtue, wisdom, and sanctity of Monseigneur Hiérome Cornille, named Jehan de la Haye, having learned that in the jail the poor girl was treated like a queen, wickedly accused the grand inquisitor of connivance with her and of being her servitor, because, said this wicked priest, she makes him young, amorous, and happy, from which the poor old man died of grief in one day, knowing by this that Jehan de la Haye had sworn his ruin and coveted his dignities. In fact, our lord the archbishop visited the jail, and found the Moorish woman in a pleasant place, reposing comfortably, and without irons, because, having placed a diamond in a place where none would have believed she could have held it, she had purchased the clemency of her jailer.

“At the time certain persons said that this jailer was smitten with her, and that from love, or perhaps in great fear of the young barons, lovers of this woman, he had planned her

escape. The good man Cornille, being at the point of death, through the treachery of Jehan de la Haye, the chapter thinking it necessary to make null and void the proceedings taken by the penitentiary, and also his decrees, the said Jehan de la Haye, at that time a simple vicar of the cathedral, pointed out that to do this it would be sufficient to obtain a public confession from the good man on his death-bed.

“Then was the moribund tortured and tormented by the gentlemen of the chapter, those of Saint-Martin, those of Marmoustiers, by the archbishop, and also by the pope’s legate, in order that he might recant to the advantage of the church, to which the good man would not consent. But after a thousand ills, his public confession was prepared, at which the most noteworthy people of the town assisted, and the which spread more horror and consternation than I can describe. The churches of the diocese held public prayers for this calamity, and every one expected to see the devil tumble into the house by the chimney. But the truth of it is that the good Master Hiérome had the fever, and saw cows in his room, and then was this recantation obtained of him. The access passed, the poor saint wept copiously on learning this trick from me. In fact, he died in my arms, assisted by his physician, heart-broken at this mummery, telling us that he was going to the feet of God to pray Him to prevent the consummation of this deplorable iniquity.

“This poor Moorish woman had touched him much by her tears and repentance, seeing that before making her demand for the judgment of God he had minutely confessed her, and by that means had disentangled the soul divine which was in her body, and of which he spoke as of a diamond worthy of adorning the holy crown of God, when she should have departed this life, after repenting her sins. Then, my dear son, knowing by the statements made in the town, and by the naïve responses of this unhappy wretch, all the trickery of this affair, I determined, by the advice of Master François de

Hangest, physician of the chapter, to feign an illness and quit the service of the church of St. Maurice and of the archbishopric, in order not to dip my hands in the innocent blood, which still cries and will continue to cry aloud unto God, until the day of the last judgment.

“Then was the jailer dismissed, and in his place was put the second son of the torturer, who threw the Moorish woman into a dungeon, and inhumanly put upon her hands and feet irons weighing fifty pounds, beside a wooden waist-band ; and the jail was watched by the crossbowmen of the town and the people of the archbishop.

“The wench was tormented and tortured, and her bones were broken ; conquered by sorrow, she made an avowal according to the wishes of Jehan de la Haye, and was instantly condemned to be burned in the inclosure of St. Étienne, having been previously placed in the portals of the church, attired in a chemise of sulphur, and her goods given over to the chapter, *et cetera*. This order was the cause of great disturbances and fighting in the town, because three young knights of Touraine swore to die in the service of the poor girl, and to deliver her in all possible ways. Then they came into town, accompanied by thousands of sufferers, laboring people, old soldiers, warriors, courtesans, and others, whom the said girl had succored, saved from misfortune, from hunger and misery, and searched all the poor dwellings of the town where lay those to whom she had done good. Thus all were stirred up and called together to the plain of Mont-Louis under the protection of the soldiers of the said lords ; they had for companions all the scapegraces of twenty leagues round, and came one morning to lay siege to the prison of the archbishop, demanding that the Moorish woman should be given up to them as though they would put her to death, but in fact to set her free, and to place her secretly upon a swift horse, that she might gain the open country, seeing that she rode like a groom.

“Then in this frighful tempest of men have we seen between the battlements of the archiepiscopal palace and the bridges more than ten thousand men swarming, beside those who were perched upon the roofs of the houses and climbing on all the balconies to see the sedition; in short, it was easy to hear the horrible cries of the Christians, who were terribly in earnest, and of those who surrounded the jail with the intention of setting the poor girl free, across the Loire, to the other side of Saint-Symphorien. The suffocation and squeezing of bodies was so great in this immense crowd, bloodthirsty for the poor creature at whose knees they would have fallen had they had the opportunity of seeing her, that seven children, eleven women, and eight citizens were crushed and smashed beyond all recognition, since they were like splodges of mud; in short, so wide open was the great mouth of this popular Leviathan, this horrible monster, that the clamor was heard at Montils-les-Tours.

“All cried :

““Death to the Succubus !

““Throw out the demon !

““Ha ! I’d like a quarter !

““I’ll have her skin !

““The foot for me, the mane for thee !

““The head for me !

““The —— for me !

““Is it red ?

““Shall we see ?

““Will it be grilled ?

““Death to her ! death to her !

“Each one had his say. But the cry, ‘Largesse to God ! Death to the Succubus !’ was yelled at the same time by the crowd so hoarsely and so cruelly that one’s ears and heart bled therefrom; and the other cries were scarcely heard in the houses.

“The archbishop decided, in order to calm this storm

which threatened to overthrow everything, to come out with great pomp from the church, bearing the host, which would deliver the chapter from ruin, since the wicked young men and the lords had sworn to destroy and burn the cloisters and all the canons. Now by this stratagem the crowd was obliged to break up, and from lack of provisions return to their houses. Then the monks of Touraine, the lords, and the citizens, in great apprehension of pillage on the morrow, held a nocturnal council, and accepted the advice of the chapter. By their efforts the men-at-arms, archers, knights, and citizens, in a large number, kept watch, and killed a party of shepherds, road-menders, and vagrants, who, knowing the disturbed state of Tours, came to swell the ranks of the malcontents. Mes-sire Harduin de Maillé, an old nobleman, reasoned with the young knights, who were the champions of the Moorish woman, and argued sagely with them, asking them if for so small a woman they wished to put Touraine to fire and sword; that even if they were victorious they would be masters of the bad characters brought together by them; that these said free-booters, after having sacked the castles of their enemies, would turn to those of their chiefs.

“ That the rebellion commenced had had no success in its first attack, because up to that time the place was untouched, could they have any over the church, which would invoke the aid of the King? and a thousand other arguments. To these reasons the young knights replied, that it was easy for the chapter to aid the girl’s escape in the night, and that thus the cause of the sedition would be removed. To this humane and wise request replied Monseigneur *de Censoris*, the pope’s legate, that it was necessary that strength should remain with the religion of the church.

“ And thereupon the poor wench paid for all, since it was agreed that no inquiry should be made concerning this sedition.

“ Then the chapter had full license to proceed to the pen-

ance of the girl, to which act and ecclesiastical ceremony the people came from twelve leagues round. So that on the day when, after divine satisfaction, the Succubus\* was to be delivered up to secular justice, in order to be publicly burned at a stake, not for a gold pound could a lord or even an abbot have found a lodging in the town of Tours.

“ The night before many camped outside the town in tents, or slept upon straw. Provisions were lacking, and many who came with their bellies full, returned with their bellies empty, having seen nothing but the reflection of the fire in the distance. And the bad characters did good strokes of business by the way.

“ The poor courtesan was half-dead; her hair had whitened. She was, to tell the truth, nothing but a skeleton, scarcely covered with flesh, and her chains weighed more than she did. If she had had joy in her life, she paid dearly for it at this moment. Those who saw her pass say that she wept and shrieked in a way that should have earned the pity of her hardest pursuers; and in the church they were compelled to put a piece of wood in her mouth, which she bit as a lizard bites a stick. Then the executioner tied her to a stake to sustain her, since she let herself roll at times and fell for want of strength. Then she suddenly recovered a vigorous handful, because, this notwithstanding, she was able, it is said, to break her cords and escape into the church, where, in remembrance of her old vocation, she climbed quickly into the galleries above, flying like a bird along the little columns and small friezes.

“ She was about to escape on to the roof when a soldier perceived her, and thrust his spear in the sole of her foot. In spite of her foot half-cut through, the poor girl still ran along the church without noticing it, going along with her bones broken and her blood gushing out, so great fear had she of the flames of the stake. At last she was taken and bound, thrown

\* In classical Latin *succuba*; though Warburton used the incorrect word in his “*Prodigies and Miracles*.<sup>”</sup>

into a tumbril and led to the stake, without being afterward heard to utter a cry.

“ The account of her flight in the church assisted in making the common people believe that she was the devil, and some of them said that she had flown in the air. As soon as the executioner of the town threw her into the flames, she made two or three horrible leaps and fell down into the bottom of the pile, which burned day and night. On the following evening I went to see if anything remained of this gentle girl, so sweet, so loving, but I found nothing but a fragment of the *os stomachal*, in which, in spite of this, there still remained some moisture, and which some say still trembled like a woman does in the same place.

“ It is impossible to tell, my dear son, the sadnesses, without number and without equal, which for about ten years weighed upon me ; always was I thinking of this angel burned by wicked men, and always I beheld her with her eyes full of love. In short, the supernatural gifts of this artless child were shining day and night before me, and I prayed for her in the church where she had been martyred. At length I had neither the strength nor the courage to look without trembling upon the grand inquisitor, Jehan de la Haye, who died eaten up by lice. Leprosy was his punishment. Fire burned his house and his wife ; and all those who had a hand in the burning had their own hand singed.

“ This, my well-beloved son, was the cause of a thousand ideas, which I have here put into writing to be forever the rule of conduct in our family.

“ I quitted the service of the church, and espoused your mother, from whom I received infinite blessings, and with whom I shared my life, my goods, my soul, and all. And she agreed with me in the following precepts—namely :

“ Firstly, that, to live happily, it is necessary to keep far away from church people, to honor them much without giving them leave to enter your house, any more than to those

who by right, just or unjust, are supposed to be superior to us.

“Secondly, to take a modest condition, and to keep one’s self in it without wishing to appear in any way rich. To have a care to excite no envy, nor strike any ones over in any manner, because it is needful to be as strong as an oak, which kills the plants at its feet, to crush envious heads, and even then would one succumb, since human oaks are especially rare, and that no Tournebouche should flatter himself that he is one, granting that he be a Tournebouche.

“Thirdly, never to spend more than one-quarter of one’s income, conceal one’s wealth, hide one’s goods and chattels, to undertake no office, to go to church like other people, and always keep one’s thoughts to one’s self, seeing that they belong to you and not to others, who twist them about, turn them after their own fashion, and make calumnies therefrom.

“Fourthly, always to remain in the condition of the Tournebouches, who are now and forever drapers. To marry your daughters to good drapers, to send your sons to be drapers in other towns of France, furnished with these wise precepts, and to bring them up to the honor of drapery, without leaving any dream of ambition in their minds. *A draper like a Tournebouche* should be their glory, their arms, their name, their motto, their life. Thus, by being always drapers, they will be always Tournebouches, and rub on like the good little insects, who, once lodged in a beam, make their dens, and go on with security to the end of their ball of thread.

“Fifthly, never to speak any other language than that of drapery, and never to dispute concerning religion or government. And even though the government of the state, the province, religion, and God turn about, or have a fancy to go to the right or to the left, always, in your quality of Tournebouche, stick to your cloth. Thus, unnoticed by the others of the town, the Tournebouches will live in peace with their

little Tournebouches—paying the tithes and taxes, and all that they are required by force to give, be it to God or to the King, to the town or to the parish, with all of whom it is unwise to struggle. Also it is necessary to keep the patrimonial treasure, to have peace and to buy peace, never to owe anything, to have corn in the house, and enjoy yourselves with the doors and windows shut.

“By this means none will take from the Tournebouches, neither the state, nor the church, nor the lords, to whom, should the case be that force is employed, you will lend a few crowns without cherishing the idea of ever seeing them again—I mean the crowns.

“Thus, in all seasons, people will love the Tournebouches, will mock the Tournebouches as poor people—as the slow Tournebouches, as Tournebouches of no understanding. Let the know-nothings say on. The Tournebouches will neither be burned nor hanged, to the advantage of King or church, or other people; and the wise Tournebouches will have secretly money in their pockets, and joy in their houses, hidden from all.

“Now, my dear son, follow this the counsel of a modest and middle-class life. Maintain this in thy family as a county charter; and when you die, let your successor maintain it as the sacred gospel of the Tournebouches, until God wills it that there be no longer Tournebouches in this world.”

*This letter has been found at the time of the inventory made in the house of François Tournebouche, lord of Veretz, chancellor to Monseigneur the Dauphin, and condemned at the time of the rebellion of the said lord against the King to lose his head, and have all his goods confiscated by order of the Parliament of Paris. The said letter has been handed to the governor of Touraine as an historical curiosity, and joined to the pieces of the process in the archbishopric of Tours, by me, Pierre Gaultier, sheriff, president of the Trades Council.*

The editor having finished the transcription and deciphering of these parchments, translating them from their strange language into French, the donor of them declared that the Rue Chaude at Tours was so called, according to certain people, because the sun remained there longer than in all other parts. But in spite of this version, people of lofty understanding will find, in the warm way of the said Succubus, the real origin of the said name. In which acquiesces the author.

This teaches us not to abuse our body, but to use it wisely in view of our salvation.



## ABOUT THE MONK AMADOR, WHO WAS A GLORIOUS ABBOT OF TURPENAY.

ONE day it was drizzling with rain—a time when the ladies remain gleefully at home, because they love the damp, and can have at their apron-strings the men who are not disagreeable to them—the Queen was in her chamber at the castle of Amboise, against the window-curtains. There, seated in her chair, she was working at a piece of tapestry to amuse herself, but was using her needle heedlessly, watching the rain fall into the Loire, and was lost in thought, where her ladies were following her example. The King was arguing with those of his Court who had accompanied him from the chapel—for it was a question of returning to dominical vespers. His arguments, statements, and reasonings finished, he looked at the Queen, saw that she was melancholy, saw that the ladies were melancholy also, and noted the fact that they were all acquainted with the mysteries of matrimony.

“Did I not see the abbot of Turpenay here just now?” said he.

Hearing these words there advanced toward the King the monk who, by his constant petitions, rendered himself so obnoxious to Louis XI., that that monarch seriously commanded his provost-royal to remove him from his sight; and it has been related in the first volume of these Stories how the monk was saved through the mistake of Sieur Tristan. The monk was at this time a man whose qualities had grown rapidly, so much so that his wit had communicated a jovial hue to his face. He was a great favorite with the ladies, who crammed him with wine, confectioneries, and dainty dishes at the din-

ners, suppers, and merry-makings to which they invited him, because every host likes those cheerful guests of God with nimble jaws, who say as many words as they put away tit-bits. This abbot was a pernicious fellow, who would relate to the ladies many a merry tale, at which they were only offended when they had heard them ; since, to judge them, things must be heard.

“ My reverend father,” said the King, “ behold the twilight hour in which ears feminine may be regaled with certain pleasant stories, for the ladies can laugh without blushing, or blush without laughing, as it suits them best. Give us a good story —a regular monk’s story. I shall listen to it, i’ faith, with pleasure, because I want to be amused, and so do the ladies.”

“ We only submit to this in order to please your lordship,” said the Queen ; “ because our good friend the abbot goes a little too far.”

“ Then,” replied the King, turning toward the monk, “ read us some Christian admonition, holy father, to amuse madame.”

“ Sire, my sight is weak and the day is closing.”

“ Give us a story, then, that stops at the girdle.”

“ Ah, Sire ! ” said the monk, smiling, “ the one I am thinking of stops there ; but it commences at the feet.”

The lords present made such gallant remonstrances and supplications to the Queen and her ladies, that, like the good Bretonne that she was, she gave the monk a gentle smile, and said :

“ As you will, my father ; but you must answer to God for our sins.”

“ Willingly, madame ; if it be your good pleasure to take mine, you will be the gainer.”

Every one laughed, and so did the Queen. The King went and sat by his dear wife, well beloved by him, as every one knows. The courtiers received permission to be seated—the

old courtiers, of course, understood ; for the young ones stood, by the ladies' permission, beside their chairs, to laugh at the same time as they did. Then the abbot of Turpenay gracefully delivered himself of the following tale, the risky passages of which he gave in a low, soft, and flute-like voice.

About a hundred years ago at the least, there occurred great quarrels in Christendom because there were two popes at Rome, each one pretending to be legitimately elected, which caused great annoyance to the monasteries, abbeys, and bishoprics, since, in order to be recognized by as many as possible, each of the two popes granted titles and rights to his adherents, the which made double owners everywhere. Under these circumstances the monasteries and abbeys that were at war with their neighbors would not recognize both the popes, and found themselves much embarrassed by the others, who always gave the verdict to the enemies of the chapter. This wicked schism brought about considerable mischief, and proved abundantly that no error is worse in Christianity than the adultery of the church.

Now, at this time, when the devil was making havoc among our possessions, the most illustrious abbey of Turpenay, of which I am at present the unworthy ruler, had a heavy trial on concerning the settlement of certain rights with the redoubtable Sire de Candé, an idolatrous infidel, a relapsed heretic, and most wicked lord. This devil, sent upon earth in the shape of a nobleman, was, to tell the truth, a good soldier, well received at court, and a friend of the Sieur Bureau de la Rivière, who was a person to whom the King was exceedingly partial—King Charles the Fifth, of glorious memory. Beneath the shelter of the favor of this Sieur de la Rivière, the lord of Candé did exactly as he pleased in the valley of the Indre, where he used to be master of everything, from Montbazon to Ussé. You may be sure that his neighbors were terribly afraid of him, and to save their skulls let him have his way. They would, however, have preferred him under the

ground to above it, and heartily wished him bad luck ; but he troubled himself little about that.

In the whole valley the noble abbey alone showed fight to this demon, for it has always been a doctrine of the church to take into her lap the weak and suffering, and use every effort to protect the oppressed, especially those whose rights and privileges are menaced. For this reason this rough warrior hated monks exceedingly, especially those of Turpenay, who would not allow themselves to be robbed of their rights either by force or stratagem. He was well pleased at the ecclesiastical schism, and waited the decision of our abbey, concerning which pope they should choose, to pillage them, being quite ready to recognize the one to whom the abbot of Turpenay should refuse his obedience.

Since his return to his castle, it was his custom to torment and annoy the priests whom he encountered upon his domains in such a manner, that a poor monk, surprised by him on his private road, which was by the water-side, perceived no other method of safety than to throw himself into the river, where, by a special miracle of the Almighty, whom the good man fervently invoked, his gown floated him on the Indre, and he made his way comfortably to the other side, which he attained in full view of the lord of Candé, who was not ashamed to enjoy the terrors of a servant of God. Now you see of what stuff this horrid man was made.

The abbot, to whom at that time the care of our glorious abbey was committed, led a most holy life, and prayed to God with devotion ; but he would have saved his own soul ten times, of such good quality was his religion, before finding a chance to save the abbey itself from the clutches of this wretch. Although he was very perplexed, and saw the evil hour at hand, he relied upon God for succor, saying that he would never allow the property of His church to be touched, and that He who had raised up the Princess Judith for the Hebrews, and Queen Lucretia for the Romans, would keep His most

illustrious abbey of Turpenay, and indulged in other equally sapient remarks. But his monks, who—to our shame I confess it—were unbelievers, reproached him with his happy-go-lucky way of looking at things, and declared that, to bring the chariot of Providence to the rescue in time, all the oxen in the province would have to be yoked to it ; that the trumpets of Jericho were no longer made in any part of the world ; that God was disgusted with His creation, and would have nothing more to do with it ; in short, a thousand and one things that were doubts and contumelies against God.

At this desperate juncture there uprose a monk named Amador. This name had been given him by way of a joke, since his person offered a perfect portrait of the false god *Ægipan*. He was, like him, strong in the stomach ; like him, had crooked legs, arms hairy as those of a saddler, a back made to carry a wallet, a face as red as the phiz of a drunkard, glistening eyes, a tangled beard, was hairy-faced, and so puffed out with fat and meat that you would have fancied him in an interesting condition.

You may be sure that he sung his matins on the steps of the wine-cellar, and said his vespers in the vineyards of the Lord. He was as fond of his bed as a beggar with sores, and would go about the valley fuddling, faddling, blessing the bridals, plucking the grapes, and giving them to the girls to taste, in spite of the prohibition of the abbot. In fact, he was a pilferer, a loiterer, and a bad soldier of the ecclesiastical militia, of whom nobody in the abbey took any notice, but let him do as he liked from motives of Christian charity, thinking him mad. Amador, knowing that it was a question of the ruin of the abbey, in which he was as snug as a bug in a rug, put up his bristles, took notice of this and of that, went into each of the cells, listened in the refectory, shivered in his shoes, and declared that he would attempt to save the abbey. He took cognizance of the contested points, received from the abbot permission to postpone the case, and was promised by the whole

chapter the vacant office of sub-prior if he succeeded in putting an end to the litigation.

Then he set off across the country, heedless of the cruelty and ill-treatment of the Sieur de Candé, saying that he had that within his gown which would subdue them. He went his way with nothing but this said gown for his viaticum; but then in it was enough fat to feed a dwarf. He selected to go to the castle, a day when it rained hard enough to fill the tubs of all the housewives, and arrived without meeting a soul, in sight of Candé, and looking like a drowned dog, stepped bravely into the courtyard, and took shelter under a sty-roof to wait until the fury of the elements had calmed down, and placed himself boldly in front of the room where the owner of the castle should be. A servant perceiving him while laying the supper, took pity on him, and told him to make himself scarce, otherwise his master would give him a horsewhipping, just to open the conversation, and asked him what made him so bold as to enter a place where monks were hated more than a red leper.

“Ah!” said Amador, “I am on my way to Tours, sent thither by my lord abbot. If the lord of Candé were not so bitter against the poor servants of God, I should not be kept during such a deluge in the courtyard, but in the house. I hope that he will find mercy in his hour of need.”

The servant reported these words to his master, who at first wished to have the monk thrown into the big trough of the castle among the other filth. But the Lady of Candé, who had great authority over her spouse, and was respected by him, because through her he expected a large inheritance, and because she was a little tyrannical, reprimanded him, saying that it was possible this monk was a Christian; that in such weather thieves would succor an officer of justice; that, beside, it was necessary to treat him well to find out to what decision the brethren of Turpenay had come with regard to the schism business, and that her advice was to put an end by kindness

and not by force to the difficulties arisen between the abbey and the domain of Candé, because no lord since the coming of Christ had ever been stronger than the church, and that sooner or later the abbey would ruin the castle; finally, she gave utterance to a thousand wise arguments, such as ladies use in the height of the storms of life, when they have had about enough of them.

Amador's face was so piteous, his appearance so wretched and so open to banter, that the lord, saddened by the weather, conceived the idea of enjoying a joke at his expense, tormenting him, playing tricks on him, and of giving him a lively recollection of his reception at the castle. Then this gentleman, who had secret relations with his wife's maid, sent this girl, who was called Perrette, to put an end to his ill-will toward the luckless Amador. As soon as the plot had been arranged between them, the wench, who hated monks, in order to please her master, went to the monk, who was standing under the pig-sty, and assuming a courteous demeanor in order the better to please him, said:

“Holy father, the master of this house is ashamed to see a servant of God out in the rain when there is room for him indoors, a good fire in the chimney, and a table spread. I invite you in his name and that of the lady of the house to step in.”

“I thank the lady and the lord, not for their hospitality, which is a Christian thing, but for having sent as an ambassador to me a poor sinner, an angel of such delicate beauty that I fancy I see the Virgin over our altar.”

Saying which, Amador raised his nose in the air, and saluted with the two flakes of fire that sparkled in his bright eyes the pretty maid-servant, who thought him neither so ugly nor so foul, nor so bestial: when, following Perrette up the steps, Amador received on the nose, cheeks, and other portions of his face a slash of the whip, which made him see all the lights of the *Magnificat*, so well was the dose administered by the

Sieur de Candé, who, busy chastening his greyhounds, pretended not to see the monk. He requested Amador to pardon him this accident, and ran after the dogs who had caused the mischief to his guest.

The laughing servant, who knew what was coming, had dexterously kept out of the way. Noticing this business, Amador suspected the relations of Perrotte and the chevalier, concerning whom it is possible that the lasses of the valley had already whispered something into his ear. Of the people who were then in the chamber not one made room for the man of God, who remained right in the draught between the door and the window, where he stood freezing until the moment when the Sire de Candé, his wife, and his aged sister, Mademoiselle de Candé, who had the charge of the young heiress of the house, aged about sixteen years, came and sat in their chairs at the head of the table, far from the common people, according to the old custom usual among the lords of the period, much to their discredit.

The Sire de Caudé, paying no attention to the monk, let him sit at the extreme end of the table, in a corner, where two mischievous lads had orders to squeeze and elbow him. Indeed, these fellows worried his feet, his body, and his arms like real torturers, poured white wine into his goblet for water, in order to fuddle him, and the better to amuse themselves with him ; but they made him drink seven large jugfuls without making him belch, break wind, sweat, or snort, which horrified them exceedingly, especially as his eye remained as clear as crystal. Encouraged, however, by a glance from their lord, they still kept on throwing, while bowing to him, gravy into his beard, and wiping it dry in a manner to tear every hair out of it.

The varlet who served a caudle baptized his head with it, and took care to let the burning liquor trickle down poor Amador's backbone. All this agony he endured with meekness, because the Spirit of God was in him, and also the hope

of finishing the litigation by holding out in the castle. Nevertheless, the mischievous lot burst out into such roars of laughter at the warm baptism given by the cook's lad to the soaked monk, even the butler making jokes at his expense, that the Lady of Candé was compelled to notice what was going on at the end of the table. Then she perceived Amador, who had a look of sublime resignation upon his face, and was endeavoring to get something out of the big beef bones that had been put upon his pewter platter. At this moment the poor monk, who had administered a dexterous blow of the knife to a big ugly bone, took it in his hairy hands, snapped it in two, sucked the warm marrow out of it, and found it good.

“Truly,” said she to herself, “God has put great strength into this monk !”

At the same time she seriously forbade the pages, servants, and others to torment the poor man, to whom out of mockery they had just given some rotten apples and maggoty nuts. He, perceiving that the old lady and her charge, the lady and the servants had seen him manœuvring the bone, pushed back his sleeve, showed the powerful muscles of his arm, placed the nuts near his wrist on the bifurcation of the veins, and crushed them one by one by pressing them with the palm of his hand so vigorously that they appeared like ripe medlars. He also crunched them between his teeth, white as the teeth of a dog, husk, shell, fruit, and all, of which he made in a second a mash which he swallowed like honey. He crushed them between two fingers, which he used like scissors to cut them in two without a moment's hesitation. You may be sure that the women were silent, that the men believed the devil to be in the monk ; and had it not been for his wife and the darkness of the night, the Sieur de Candé, having the fear of God before his eyes, would have kicked him out of the house.

Every one declared that the monk was a man capable of

throwing the castle into the moat. Therefore, as soon as every one had wiped his mouth, my lord took care to imprison this devil, whose strength was terrible to behold, and had him conducted to a wretched little closet where Perrotte had arranged her machine, in order to annoy him during the night. The tom-cats of the neighborhood had been requested to come and confess to him, invited to tell him their sins in embryo toward the tabbies who attracted their affections, and also the little pigs, for whom fine lumps of tripe had been placed under the bed in order to prevent them from becoming monks, of which they were very desirous, by disgusting them with the style of *libera*\* which the monk would sing to them. At every movement of poor Amador, who would find short horsehair in the sheets, he would bring down cold water on to the bed, and a thousand other tricks were arranged, such as are usually practiced in castles.

Every one went to bed in expectation of the nocturnal revels of the monk, certain that they would not be disappointed, since he had been lodged under the tiles at the top of a little tower, the guard of the door of which was committed to dogs who howled for a bit of him. In order to ascertain in what language the conversation with the cats and pigs would be carried on, the sire came to stay with his dear Perrotte, who slept in the next room. As soon as he found himself thus treated, Amador drew from his bag a knife and dexterously extricated himself. Then he began to listen in order to find out the ways of the place, and heard the master of the house laughing with his maid-servant. Suspecting their manœuvres, he waited till the moment when the lady of the house should be alone in bed, and made his way into her room with bare feet, in order that his sandals should not be in his secrets. He appeared to her by the light of the lamp in the manner in which monks generally appear during the night —that is in a marvelous state, which the laity find it difficult

\* Time-pulse, in music.

long to sustain ; and the thing is an effect of the frock, which magnifies everything.

Then having let her see that he was all a monk, he made the following little speech :

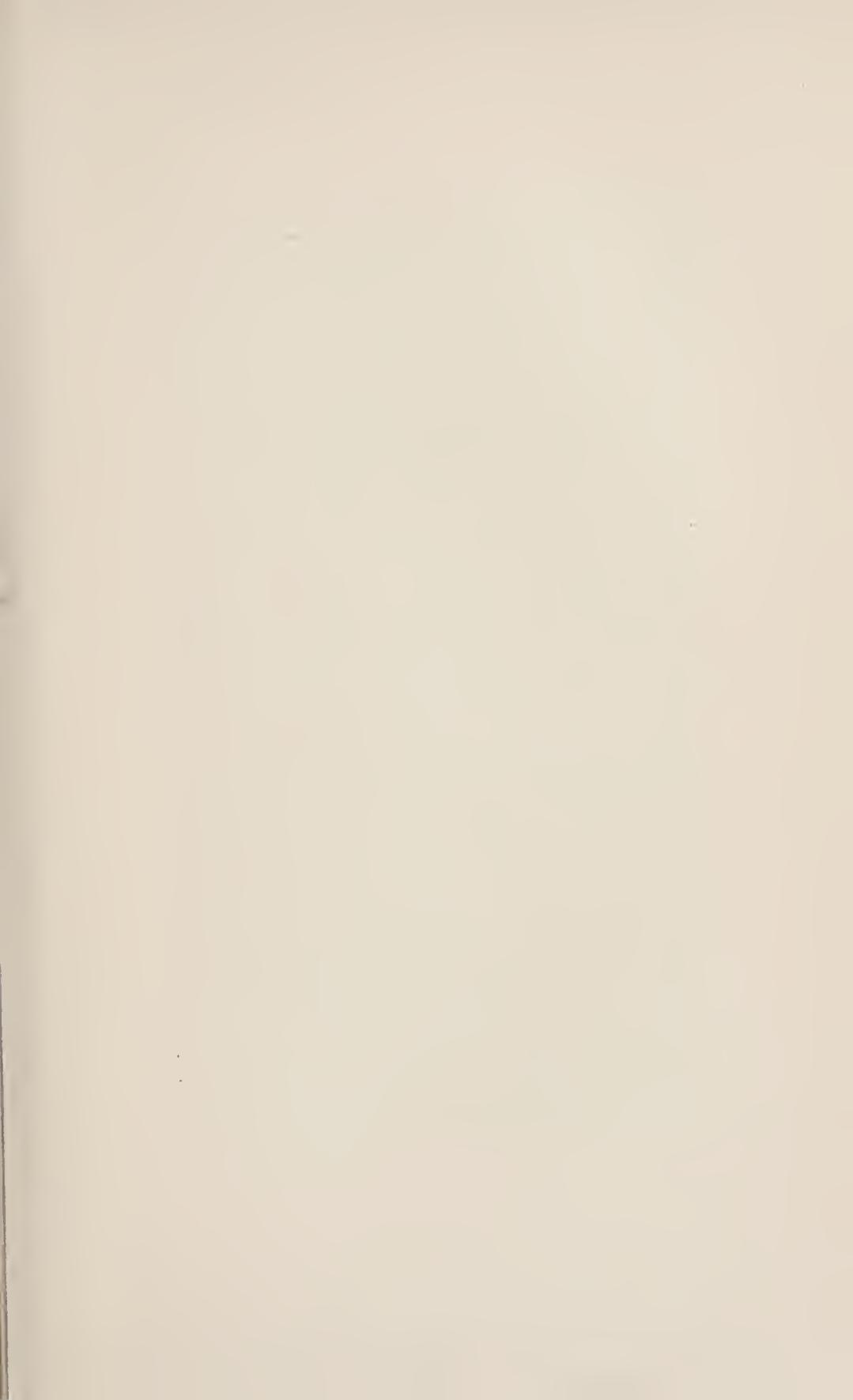
“ Know, madame, that I am sent by Jesus and the Virgin Mary to warn you to put an end to the improper perversities which are taking place—to the injury of your virtue, which is treacherously deprived of your husband’s best attention, which he lavishes upon your maid. What is the use of being a lady if the seigneurial dues are received elsewhere. According to this, your servant is the lady and you are the servant. Are not all the joys bestowed upon her due to you? You will find them all amassed in our holy church, which is the consolation of the afflicted. Behold in me the messenger, ready to pay these debts if you do not renounce them.”

Saying this, the good monk gently loosened his girdle in which he was incommoded, so much did he appear affected by the sight of those beauties which the Sieur de Candé disdained.

“ If you speak truly, my father, I will submit to your guidance,” said she, springing lightly out of the bed. “ You are, for sure, a messenger of God, because you have seen in a single day that which I have not noticed here for a long time.”

Then she went, accompanied by Amador, whose holy robe she did not fail to run her hand over, and was so struck when she found it real, that she hoped to find her husband guilty ; and indeed she heard him talking about the monk in her servant’s bed. Perceiving this felony, she went into a furious rage, and opened her mouth to resolve it into words—which is the usual method of women—and wished to kick up the devil’s delight before handing the girl over to justice. But Amador told her that it be more sensible to avenge herself first, and cry out afterward.

“ Avenge me quickly, then, my father,” said she, “ that I may begin to cry out.”





*THE MONK AMADOR.*



Thereupon the monk avenged her most monastically with a good and ample vengeance, that she indulged in as a drunkard who puts his lips to the bung-hole of a barrel ; for when a lady avenges herself, she should get drunk with vengeance, or not taste it at all. And the chatelaine was revenged to that degree that she could not move ; since nothing agitates, takes away the breath, and exhausts, like anger and vengeance. But although she was avenged, and doubly and trebly avenged, yet would she not forgive, in order that she might reserve the right of avenging herself with the monk, now here, now there. Perceiving this love for vengeance, Amador promised to aid her in it as long as her ire lasted, for he informed her that he knew, in his quality of a monk, constrained to meditate long on the nature of things, an infinite number of modes, methods, and manners of practicing revenge.

Then he pointed out to her canonically what a Christian thing it is to revenge one's self, because all through the Holy Scriptures God declares Himself, above all things, to be a God of vengeance ; and, moreover, demonstrates to us, by His establishment in the infernal regions, how royally divine a thing vengeance is, since His vengeance is eternal. From which it followed that women and monks ought to revenge themselves, under pain of not being Christians and faithful servants of celestial doctrines.

This dogma pleased the lady much, and she confessed that she had never understood the commandments of the church, and invited her well-beloved monk to enlighten her thoroughly concerning them. Then the chatelaine, whose vital spirits had been excited by the vengeance which had refreshed them, went into the room where the jade was amusing herself, and by chance found her with her hand where she, the chatelaine, often had her eye—like the merchants have on their most precious articles, in order to see that they are not stolen. They were—according to President Lizet when he was in merry mood—a couple taken in flagrant delectation,

and looked dumrounded, sheepish, and foolish. The sight that met her eyes displeased the lady beyond the power of words to express, as it appeared by her discourse, of which the roughness was similar to that of the water of her big pond when the sluice-gates were opened. It was a sermon in three heads, accompanied with music of a high gamut, varied in the tones, with many sharps among the keys.

“Out upon virtue! my lord; I’ve had my share of it. You have shown me that religion in conjugal faith is an abuse; this is then the reason that I have no son. How many children have you consigned to this common oven, this poorbox, this bottomless alms-purse, this leper’s porringer, the true cemetery of the house of Candé? I will know if I am childless from a constitutional defect, or through your fault. I will have handsome cavaliers, in order that I may have an heir. You can get the bastards, I the legitimate children.”

“My dear,” said the bewildered lord, “don’t shout so.”

“But,” replied the lady, “I will shout, and shout to make myself heard, heard by the archbishop, heard by the legate, by the King, by my brothers, who will avenge this infamy for me.”

“Do not dishonor your husband!”

“This is a dishonor, then! You are right; but, my lord, it is not brought about by you, but by this hussy, whom I will have sewn up in a sack and thrown into the Indre; thus your dishonor will be washed away. Hi, there!” she called out.

“Silence, madame!” said the lord, as shamefaced as a blind man’s dog; because this great warrior, so ready to kill others, was like a child in the hands of his wife, a state of affairs to which soldiers are accustomed, because in them lies the strength and is found all the dull carnality of matter; while, on the contrary, in woman is a subtle spirit and a scintillation of perfumed flame that lights up paradise and dazzles the male. This is the reason that certain women govern their husbands, because mind is the master of matter.

(At this the ladies began to laugh, as did also the King.)

“I will not be silent,” said the Lady of Candé (said the abbot, continuing his tale); “I have been too grossly outraged. This, then, is the reward of the wealth I brought you, and of my virtuous conduct! Did I ever refuse to obey you even during Lent, and on fast days? Am I so cold as to freeze the sun? Do you think that I embrace by force, from duty, or pure kindness of heart? Am I too hallowed for you to touch? Am I a holy shrine? Was there need of a papal brief to kiss me? God’s truth! have you had so much of me that you are tired? Am I not to your taste? Do charming wenches know more than ladies?

“Ha! perhaps it is so, since she has let you work in the field without sowing. Teach me the business; I will practice it with those whom I take into my service, for it is settled that I am free. That is as we should be. Your society was wearisome, and the little pleasure I derived from it cost me too dear. Thank God! I am quit of you and your whims, because I intend to retire to a monastery.” (She meant to say a convent, but this avenging monk had perverted her tongue.)

“And I shall be more comfortable in this monastery, with my daughter, than in this place of abominable wickedness. You can inherit from your wench. Ha! ha! the fine Lady of Candé! Look at her!”

“What is the matter?” said Amador, appearing suddenly upon the scene.

“The matter is, my father,” replied she, “that my wrongs cry aloud for vengeance. To begin with, I shall have this trollop thrown into the river, sewn up in a sack, for having diverted the seed of the house of Candé from its proper channel. It will be saving the hangman a job. For the rest I will——”

“Abandon your anger, my daughter,” said the monk. “It is commanded us by the church to forgive those who

trespass against us, if we would find favor in the sight of heaven, because you pardon those who also pardon others. God avenges Himself eternally on those who have avenged themselves, but keeps in His paradise those who have pardoned. From that comes the jubilee, which is a day of great rejoicing, because all debts and offenses are forgiven. Thus it is a source of happiness to pardon. Pardon ! pardon ! to pardon is a most holy work.

“Pardon Monseigneur de Candé, who will bless you for your gracious clemency, and will henceforth love you much. This forgiveness will restore to you the flowers of youth ; and believe, my dear sweet young lady, that forgiveness is in certain cases the best means of vengeance. Pardon your maid-servant, who will pray heaven for you. Thus God, supplicated by all, will have you in His keeping, and will bless you with male lineage for this pardon.”

Thus saying, the monk took the hand of the sire, placed it in that of the lady, and added :

“Go and talk over the pardon.”

And then he whispered into the husband’s ear this sage advice :

“My lord, use your best argument, and you will silence her with it, because a woman’s mouth is only full of words when she is empty elsewhere. Argue continually, and thus you will always have the upper hand of your wife.”

“By the body of Jupiter ! there’s good in this monk after all,” said the seigneur as he went out.

As soon as Amador found himself alone with Perrotte he spoke to her as follows :

“You are to blame, my dear, for having wished to torment a poor servant of God ; therefore are you now the object of celestial wrath, which will fall upon you. To whatever place you fly it will always follow you, will seize upon you in every limb, even after your death, and will cook you like a pasty in the oven of hell, where you will simmer eternally, and every

day you will receive seven hundred thousand lashes of the whip, for the one I received through you."

"Ah, holy father," said the wench, casting herself at the monk's feet, "you alone can save me, for in your gown I should be sheltered from the anger of God."

Saying this, she raised the robe to place herself beneath it, and exclaimed:

"By my faith! monks are made better than knights."

"By the sulphur of the devil! are you not acquainted with monks?"

"No," said Perrotte.

"And you don't know the service that monks sing without saying a word?"

"No."

Thereupon the monk went through this said service for her, as it is sung on great feast-days, with all the grand effects used in monasteries, the psalms well chanted in *fa* major, the flaming tapers, and the choristers, and explained to her the *Introit*, and also the *Ite missa est*, and departed, leaving her so sanctified that the wrath of heaven would have great difficulty in discovering any portion of the girl that was not thoroughly monasticated.

By his orders, Perrotte conducted him to Mademoiselle de Candé, the lord's sister, to whom he went in order to learn if it was her desire to confess to him, because monks came so rarely to the castle. The lady was delighted, as would any good Christian have been, at such a chance of clearing out her conscience. Amador requested her to show him her conscience, and she having allowed him to see that which he considered the conscience of old maids, he found it in a bad state, and told her that the sins of women were accomplished there; that to be for the future without sin it was necessary to have the conscience corked up by a monk's indulgence. The poor ignorant lady having replied that she did not know where these indulgences were to be had, the monk informed

her that he had a relic with him which enabled him to grant one, that nothing was more indulgent than this relic, because without saying a word it produced infinite pleasures, which is the true, eternal, and primary character of an indulgence.

The poor lady was so pleased with this relic, the virtue of which she tried in various ways, that her brain became muddled, and she had so much faith in it that she indulged as devoutly in indulgences as the lady of Candé had indulged in vengeances. This business of confession woke up the younger demoiselle de Candé, who came to watch the proceedings. You may imagine that the monk had hoped for this occurrence, since his mouth watered at the sight of this fair blossom, whom he also confessed, because the elder lady could not hinder him from bestowing upon the younger one, who wished it, what remained of his indulgences. But, remember, this pleasure was due to him for the trouble he had taken.

The morning having dawned, the pigs having eaten their tripe, and the cats having become disenchanted with love, and having watered all the places rubbed with herbs, Amador went to rest himself in his bed, which Perrotte had put straight again. Every one slept, thanks to the monk, so long, that no one in the castle was up before noon, which was the dinner-hour. The servants all believed the monk to be a devil who had carried off the cats, the pigs, and also their masters. In spite of these ideas, however, every one was in the room at meal-time.

“Come, my father,” said the chatelaine, giving her arm to the monk, whom she put at her side in the baron’s chair, to the great astonishment of the attendants, because the Lord of Candé said not a word.

“Page, give some of this to Father Amador,” said madame.

“Father Amador has need of so-and-so,” quoth the demoiselle de Candé.

“Fill up Father Amador’s goblet,” thus the sire.

“Father Amador has no bread,” said the little lady.

“ What do you require, Father Amador ? ” asked Perrotte. It was Father Amador here, Father Amador there. He was regaled like a little maiden on her wedding-night.

“ Eat, father,” said madame ; “ you made such a bad meal yesterday.”

“ Drink, father,” put in the seigneur. “ You are, 'sblood ! the finest monk I ever set eyes on.”

“ Father Amador is a handsome monk,” said Perrotte.

“ An indulgent monk,” said the demoiselle.

“ A beneficent monk,” said the little one.

“ A great monk,” said the lady.

“ A monk who well deserves his name,” said the clerk of the castle.

Amador munched and chewed, tried all the dishes, lapped up the hypocras, licked his chaps, sneezed, blew himself out, strutted and stamped about like a bull in a field. The others regarded him with great fear, believing him to be a magician.

Dinner over, the Lady of Candé, the demoiselle, and the little one besought the Sire de Candé, with a thousand fine arguments, to terminate the litigation. A great deal was said to him by madame, who pointed out to him how useful a monk was in a castle ; by mademoiselle, who wished for the future to polish up her conscience every day ; by the little one, who pulled her father's beard, and asked that this monk might always be at Candé. If ever the difference were arranged, it would be by the monk ; the monk was of a good understanding, gentle and virtuous as a saint ; it was a misfortune to be at enmity with a monastery containing such monks. If all the monks were like him, the abbey would always have everywhere the advantage of the castle, and would ruin it, because this monk was very strong. Finally they gave utterance to a thousand reasons, which were like a deluge of words, and were so pluvially showered down that the knight yielded, saying that there would never be a moment's peace in the house until matters were settled to the satisfaction of the women.

Then he sent for the clerk, who wrote down for him, and also for the monk. Then Amador surprised them exceedingly by showing them the charters and letters of credit, which would prevent the knight and his clerk delaying this agreement.

When the Lady of Candé saw them about to put an end to this old case, she went to the linen-chest to get some fine cloth to make a new one for her dear Amador. Every one in the house had noticed how his old gown was worn, and it would have been a great shame to leave such a treasure in such a worn-out case. Every one was eager to work at the gown. Madame cut it, the servant put the hood on, the demoiselle sewed it, and the little demoiselle worked at the sleeves. And all set so heartily to work to adorn the monk that the robe was ready by supper-time, as was also the charter of agreement prepared and sealed by the Sire de Candé.

“Ah, my father!” said the lady, “if you love us, you will refresh yourself after your merry labor by washing yourself in a bath that I have had heated by Perrotte.”

Amador was then bathed in scented water. When he came out he found a new robe of fine linen and lovely sandals ready for him, which made him appear the most glorious monk in the world.

Meanwhile, the monks of Turpenay, fearing for Amador, had ordered two of their number to spy about the castle. These spies came round by the moat, just as Perrotte threw Amador’s greasy old gown, with other rubbish, into it. Seeing which, they thought that it was all over with the poor madman. They therefore returned, and announced that it was certain Amador had suffered martyrdom in the service of the abbey. Hearing which, the abbot ordered them to assemble in the chapel and pray to God, in order to assist this devoted servant in his torments.

The monk having supped, put his charter into his girdle, and wished to return to Turpenay. Then he found at the foot of the steps madame’s mare, bridled and saddled, and

held ready for him by a groom. The lord had ordered his men-at-arms to accompany the good monk, so that no accident might befall him. Seeing which, Amador pardoned the tricks of the night before, and bestowed his benediction upon every one before taking his departure from this converted place. Madame followed him with her eyes, and proclaimed him a splendid rider. Perrette declared that for a monk he held himself more upright in the saddle than any of the men-at-arms. Mademoiselle de Candé sighed. The little one wished to have him for her confessor.

“He has sanctified the castle,” said they, when they were in the room again.

When Amador and his suite came to the gates of the abbey a scene of terror ensued, since the guardian thought that the Sire de Candé had had his appetite for monks whetted by the blood of poor Amador, and wished to sack the abbey. But Amador shouted with his fine bass voice, and was recognized and admitted into the courtyard; and when he dismounted from madame’s mare there was uproar enough to make the monks as wild as April moons. They gave vent to shouts of joy in the refectory, and all came to congratulate Amador, who waved the charter over his head. The men-at-arms were regaled with the best wine in the cellars, which was a present made to the monks of Turpenay by those of Marmoustier, to whom belonged the lands of Vouvray. The good abbot, having had the document of the Sire de Candé read, went about saying:

“On these divine occasions there always appears the finger of God, to whom we should render thanks.”

As the good abbot kept on at this finger of God, when thanking Amador, the monk, annoyed to see the instrument of their delivery thus diminished, said to him:

“Well, say that it was the arm, my father, and drop the subject.”

The termination of this trial between the Sieur de Candé

and the abbey of Turpenay was followed by a blessing which rendered him devoted to the church, because nine months after he had a son. Two years afterward Amador was chosen abbot by the monks, who reckoned upon a merry government with a madcap. But Amador, become an abbot, became steady and austere, because he had conquered his evil desires by his labors, and recast his nature at the female forge, in which is that fire which is the most perfecting, persevering, persistent, perdurable, permanent, perennial, and permeating fire that there ever was in the world. It is a fire to ruin everything, and it ruined so well the evil that was in Amador that it left only that which it could not eat—that is, his wit, which was as clear as a diamond, which is, as every one knows, a residue of the great fire by which our globe was formerly carbonized.

Amador was thus become the instrument chosen by Providence to reform our illustrious abbey, since he put everything right there, watched night and day over his monks, made them all rise at the hours appointed for prayers, counted them in chapel as a shepherd counts his sheep, kept them well in hand, and punished their faults so severely that he made them most virtuous brethren.

This teaches us to look upon womankind more as the instruments of our salvation than of our pleasure. Beside which, this narrative teaches us that we should never attempt to struggle with the churchmen.

The King and the Queen found this tale in the best taste ; the courtiers confessed that they had never heard a better ; and the ladies would all willingly have been the heroines of it.

## BERTHA THE PENITENT.

### I.

#### HOW BERTHA REMAINED A MAIDEN IN THE MARRIED STATE.

ABOUT the time of the first flight of the dauphin which threw our good Sire, Charles the Victorious, into a state of great dejection, there happened a great misfortune to a noble house of Touraine, since extinct in every branch; and it is owing to this fact that this most deplorable history may now safely be brought to light. To aid him in this work the author calls to his assistance the holy confessors, martyrs, and other celestial dominations, who, by the commandments of God, were the promoters of good in this affair.

From some defect in his character, the Sire Imbert de Bastarnay, one of the most landed lords in our land of Touraine, had no confidence in the mind of the female of man, whom he considered much too animated, on account of her numerous vagaries, and it may be he was right. In consequence of this idea he reached his old age without a companion, which was certainly not to his advantage. Always leading a solitary life, this said man had no idea of making himself agreeable to others, having only been mixed up with wars and the orgies of bachelors, with whom he did not put himself out of the way. Thus he remained stale in his garments, sweating in his accoutrements, with dirty hands and an apish face. In short, he looked the ugliest man in Christendom.

As far as regards his person only though, since so far as his heart, his head, and other secret places were concerned, he had properties which rendered him most praiseworthy. An

angel (pray believe this) would have walked a long way without meeting an old warrior firmer at his post, a lord with a more spotless escutcheon, of shorter speech, and more perfect loyalty.

Certain people have stated they have heard that he gave sound advice, and was a good and profitable man to consult. Was it not a strange freak on the part of God, who plays jokes sometimes on us, to have granted so many perfections to a man so badly appareled? When he was sixty in appearance, though only fifty in years, he determined to take unto himself a wife, in order to obtain lineage. Then, while foraging about for a place where he might be able to find a lady to his liking, he heard much vaunted the great merits and perfections of a daughter of the illustrious house of Rohan, which at that time had some property in the province. The young lady in question was called Bertha, that being her pet name. Imbert, having been to see her at the castle of Montbazon, was, in consequence of the prettiness and innocent virtue of this said Bertha de Rohan, seized with so great a desire to possess her that he determined to make her his wife, believing that never could a girl of such lofty descent fail in her duty.

This marriage was soon celebrated, because the Lord of Rohan had seven daughters, and hardly knew how to provide for them all, at a time when people were just recovering from the late wars, and patching up their unsettled affairs. Now the good man Bastarnay happily found Bertha really a maiden, which fact bore witness to her proper bringing up and perfect maternal correction. So immediately the night arrived when it should be lawful for him to embrace her, he got her with child so roughly that he had proof of the result two months after marriage, which rendered the Sieur Imbert joyful to a degree.

In order that we may here finish with this portion of the story, let us at once state that from this legitimate grain was

born the Sire de Bastarnay, who was duke by the grace of Louis the Eleventh, his chamberlain, and, more than that, his ambassador in the countries of Europe, and well-beloved of this most redoubtable lord, to whom he was never faithless. His loyalty was an heritage from his father, who from his early youth was much attached to the dauphin, whose fortunes he followed, even in the rebellions, since he was a man to put Christ on the cross again if he had been required by him to do so, which is the flower of friendship rarely to be found encompassing princes and great people.

At first, the fair lady of Bastarnay comported herself so loyally that her society caused those thick vapors and black clouds to vanish which obscured in the mind of this great man the brightness of the feminine glory. Now, according to the custom of unbelievers, he passed from suspicion to confidence so thoroughly that he yielded up the government of his house to the said Bertha, made her mistress of his deeds and actions, queen of his honor, guardian of his gray hairs, and would have slaughtered without a contest any one who had said an evil word concerning this mirror of virtue, on whom no breath had fallen save the breath issued from his conjugal and marital lips, cold and withered as they were. To speak truly on all points, it should be explained that this virtuous behavior considerably aided the little boy, who during six years occupied day and night the attention of his pretty mother, who first nourished him with her milk, and made of him a lover's lieutenant, yielding to him her sweet breasts, which he gnawed at, hungry, as often as he would, and was, like a lover, always there. This good mother knew no other pleasures than those of his rosy lips, had no other caresses than those of his tiny little hands, which ran about her like the feet of playful mice, read in no other book than his clear baby eyes, in which the blue sky was reflected, and listened to no other music than his cries, which sounded in her ears as angels' whispers. You may be sure that she was always

fondling him, had a desire to kiss him at dawn of day, kissed him in the evening, would rise in the night to eat him up with kisses, made herself a child as he was a child, educated him in the perfect religion of maternity; finally, behaved as the best and happiest mother that ever lived, without disparagement to our lady the Virgin, who could have had little trouble in bringing up our Saviour, since he was God.

This employment and the little taste which Bertha had for the blisses of matrimony much delighted the old man, since he would have been unable to return the affection of a too amorous wife, and desired to practice economy, to have the withwithal for a second child. After six years had passed away, the mother was compelled to give her son into the hands of the grooms and other persons to whom Messire de Bastarnay committed the task to mould him properly, in order that his heir should have an heritage of the virtues, qualities, and courage of the house, as well as the domains and the name. Then did Bertha shed many tears, her happiness being gone. For the great heart of this mother it was nothing to have this well-beloved son after others, and during only certain short fleeting hours. Therefore she became sad and melancholy.

Noticing her grief, the goodman wished to bestow upon her another child and could not, and the poor lady was displeased thereat, because she declared that the making of a child wearied her much and cost her dear. And this is true, or no doctrine is true, and you must burn the Gospels as a pack of stories if you have not faith in this innocent remark. This, nevertheless, to certain ladies (I do not mention men, since they have a smattering of the science), this will still seem an untruth.

The writer has taken care here to give the mute reasons of this strange antipathy; I mean the distaste of Bertha, because I love the ladies above all things, knowing that for want of the pleasure of love, my face would grow old and my heart torment me. Did you ever meet a scribe so complaisant and

so fond of the ladies as I am! No; of course not. Therefore do I love them devotedly, but not so often as I could wish, since I have oftener in my hands my goosequill than I have the barbs with which one tickles their lips to make them laugh and be merry in all innocence. I understand them, and in this way.

The goodman Bastarnay was not a smart young fellow of an amorous nature, and acquainted with the pranks of the thing. He did not trouble himself much about the fashion in which he killed a soldier so long as he killed him; he would have killed him in all ways without saying a word, in battle, of course, understood. This perfect heedlessness in the matter of death was in accordance with his nonchalance in the matter of life, the birth and manner of begetting a child, and the ceremonies thereto appertaining. The good knight was ignorant of the many litigious, dilatory, interlocutory, and preparatory exploits and the little humorings of the little fagots placed in the oven to heat it; of the sweet perfumed branches gathered little by little in the forests of love, fondlings, coddlings, huggings, nursing, the bites at the cherry, the catlicking, and other little tricks and traffic of love which ruffians know, which lovers preserve, and which the ladies love better than their salvation, because there is more of the cat than the woman in them. This shines forth in perfect evidence in their feminine ways.

If you think it worth while watching them, examine them attentively while they eat: not one of them (I am speaking of women, noble and well-educated) puts her knife in the eatables and thrusts it into her mouth, as do brutally the males; no, they turn over their food, pick the pieces that please them as they would gray peas in a dovecot; they suck the sauces by mouthfuls; play with their knife and spoon as if they only ate in consequence of a judge's order, so much do they dislike to go straight to the point; and make free use of variations, finesse, and little tricks in everything, which is the especial

attribute of these creatures, and the reason that the sons of Adam delight in them, since they do everything differently to themselves, and they do well. You think so, too. Good ! I love you.

Now then, Imbert de Bastarnay, an old soldier, ignorant of the tricks of love, entered into the sweet garden of Venus as he would into a place taken by assault, without giving any heed to the cries of the poor inhabitants in tears, and placed a child as he would an arrow in the dark. Although the gentle Bertha was not used to such treatment (poor child, she was but fifteen), she believed, in her virgin faith, that the happiness of becoming a mother demanded this terrible, dreadful bruising and nasty business ; so during this painful task she would pray to God to assist her, and recite *aves* to our lady, esteeming her lucky, in only having the Holy Ghost to endure. By this means, never having experienced anything but pain in marriage, she never troubled her husband to go through the ceremony again. Now, seeing that the old fellow was scarcely equal to it—as has been before stated—she lived in perfect solitude, like a nun. She hated the society of men, and never suspected that the Author of the world had put so much joy in that from which she had only received infinite misery.

But she loved all the more her little one, who had cost her so much before he was born. Do not be astonished, therefore, that she held aloof from that gallant tourney in which it is the mare who governs her cavalier, guides him, fatigues him, and abuses him if he stumbles. This is the true history of certain unhappy unions, according to the statement of the old men and women, and the certain reason of the follies committed by certain women, who too late perceive, I know not how, that they have been deceived, and attempt to crowd into a day more time than it will hold, to have their proper share of life. That is philosophical, my friends. Therefore study well this page, in order that you

may wisely look to the proper government of your wives, your sweethearts, and all females generally, and particularly who by chance may be under your care, from which God preserve you. Thus a virgin in deed, although a mother, Bertha was in her one-and-twentieth year a castle flower, the glory of her goodman, and the honor of the province.

The said Bastarnay took great pleasure in beholding this child come, go, and frisk about like a willow-switch, as lively as an eel, as innocent as her little one, and still most sensible and of sound understanding ; so much so that he never undertook any project without consulting her about it, seeing that if the minds of these angels have not been disturbed in their purity, they give a sound answer to everything one asks of them. At this time Bertha lived near the town of Loches, in the castle of her lord, and there resided, with no desire to do anything but look after her household duties, after the old custom of the good housewives, from which the ladies of France were led away when Queen Catherine and the Italians came with their balls and merry-makings. To these practices Francis the First and his successors, whose easy ways did as much harm to the state of France as the goings on of the Protestants, lent their aid. This, however, has nothing to do with my story. About this time the lord and lady of Bastarnay were invited by the King to come to his town of Loches, where for the present he was with his Court, in which the beauty of the lady of Bastarnay had made a great noise. Bertha came to Loches, received many kind praises from the King, was the centre of the homage of all the young nobles, who feasted their eyes on this apple of love, and of the old ones, who warmed themselves at this sun. But you may be sure that all of them, old and young, would have suffered death a hundred times over to have at their service this instrument of joy, which dazzled their eyes and muddled their brains.

Bertha was more talked about in Loches than either God or

the Gospels, which enraged a great many ladies who were not so bountifully endowed with charms, and would have given all that was left of their honor to have sent back to her castle this fair gatherer of smiles. A young lady having early perceived that one of her lovers was smitten with Bertha, took such a hatred to her that from it arose all the misfortunes of the lady of Bastarnay ; but also from the same source came her happiness, and her discovery of the gentle land of love, of which she was ignorant. This wicked lady had a relation who had confessed to her, directly he saw Bertha, that to be her lover he would be willing to die after a month's happiness with her. Bear in mind that this cousin was as handsome as a girl is beautiful, had no hair on his chin, would have gained his enemy's forgiveness by asking for it, so melodious was his young voice, and was scarcely twenty years of age.

“ Dear cousin,” said she to him, “ leave the room, and go to your house ; I will endeavor to give you this joy. But do not let yourself be seen by her, nor by that old baboon-face, by an error of nature on a Christian's body, and to whom belongs this beauteous fay.”

The young gentleman out of the way, the lady came rubbing her treacherous nose against Bertha's, and called her “ My friend, my treasure, my star of beauty ; ” trying in every way to be agreeable to her, to make her vengeance more certain on the poor child who, all unwittingly, had caused her lover's heart to be faithless, which, for women ambitious in love, is the worst of infidelities. After a little conversation, the plotting lady suspected that poor Bertha was a maiden in matters of love, when she saw her eyes full of limpid water, no marks on the temples, no little black speck on the point of her little nose, white as snow, where usually the marks of the amusement are visible, no wrinkle on her brow ; in short, no habit of pleasure apparent on her face—clear as the face of an innocent maiden.

Then this traitress put certain women's questions to her,

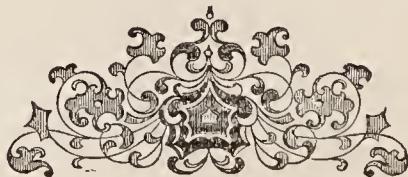
and was perfectly assured by the replies of Bertha, that, if she had had the profit of being a mother, the pleasures of love had been denied to her. At this she rejoiced greatly on her cousin's behalf—like the good woman she was. Then she told her, that in the town of Loches there lived a young and noble lady, of the family of Rohan, who at that time had need of the assistance of a lady of position to be reconciled with the Sire Louis de Rohan ; that if she had as much goodness as God had given her beauty, she would take her with her to her castle, ascertain for herself the sanctity of her life, and bring about a reconciliation with the Sire de Rohan, who refused to receive her. To this Bertha consented without hesitation, because the misfortunes of this girl were known to her, but not the poor young lady herself, whose name was Sylvia, and whom she had believed to be in a foreign land.

It is here necessary to state why the King had given this invitation to the Sire de Bastarnay. He had a suspicion of the first flight of his son the dauphin into Burgundy and wished to deprive him of so good a councilor as was the said Bastarnay. But the veteran, faithful to young Louis, had already, without saying a word, made up his mind. Therefore he took Bertha back to his castle; but before they set out she told him she had taken a companion and introduced her to him. It was the young lord, disguised as a girl, with the assistance of his cousin, who was jealous of Bertha, and annoyed at her virtue. Imbert drew back a little when he learnt it was Sylvia de Rohan, but was also much affected at the kindness of Bertha, whom he thanked for her attempt to bring a little wandering lamb back to the fold.

He made much of his wife, when his last night at home came, left men-at-arms about the castle, and then set out with the dauphin for Burgundy, having a cruel enemy in his bosom without suspecting it. The face of the young lad was unknown to him, because he was a young page come to see the King's Court, and who had been brought up by Cardinal Dunois, in

whose service he was a knight-bachelor. The old lord, believing that it was a girl, thought him very modest and timid, because the lad, doubting the language of his eyes, kept them always cast down ; and when Bertha kissed him on the mouth, he trembled lest his petticoat might be indiscreet, and would walk away to the window, so fearful was he of being recognized as a man by Bastarnay, and killed before he had made love to the lady.

Therefore he was as joyful as any lover would have been in his place, when the portcullis was lowered, and the old lord galloped away across the country. He had been in such suspense that he made a vow to build a pillar at his own expense in the cathedral of Tours, because he had escaped the danger of his mad scheme. He gave, indeed, fifty gold marks to pay God for his delight. But by chance he had to pay for it over again to the devil, as it appears from the following facts, if the tale pleases you well enough to induce you to follow the narrative, which will be succinct, as all good speeches should be.



## II.

### HOW BERTHA BEHAVED, KNOWING THE BUSINESS OF LOVE.

This bachelor was the young Sieur Jehan de Sacchez, cousin of the Sieur de Montmorency, to whom, by the death of the said Jehan, the fiefs of Sacchez and other places would return, according to the deed of tenure. He was twenty years of age, and glowed like burning coal ; therefore you may be sure that he had a hard job to get through the first day. While old Imbert was galloping across the fields, the two cousins perched themselves under the lantern of the portcullis, in order to keep him the longer in view, and waved him signals of farewell. When the clouds of dust raised by the heels of the horses were no longer visible upon the horizon, they came down and went back into the great room of the castle.

“What shall we do, dear cousin ?” said Bertha to the false Sylvia. “Do you like music ? we will play together. Let us sing the lay of some sweet ancient bard. Eh ? what do you say ? Come to my organ ; come along. As you love me, sing !”

Then she took Jehan by the hand and led him to the keyboard of the organ, at which the young fellow seated himself prettily after the manner of women.

“Ah ! sweet coz,” cried Bertha, as soon as the first notes tried, the lad turned his head toward her, in order that they might sing together, “ah, sweet coz, you have a wonderful glance in your eye ; you move I know not what in my heart.”

“Ah, cousin,” replied the false Sylvia, “that it is which has been my ruin. A sweet milord of the land across the sea told me so often that I had fine eyes, and kissed them so well,

that I yielded, so much pleasure did I feel in letting them be kissed."

"Cousin, does love, then, commence in the eyes?"

"In them is the forge of Cupid's bolts, my dear Bertha," said the lover, casting fire and flame at her.

"Let us go on with our singing."

Then they sang, by Jehan's desire, a lay of Christine de Pisan, every word of which breathed love.

"Ah, cousin, what a deep and powerful voice you have; it seems to pierce me."

"Where?" said the impudent Sylvia.

"There," replied Bertha, touching her little diaphragm, where the sounds of love are understood better than by the ears; but the diaphragm lies nearer the heart, and that which is undoubtedly the first brain, the second heart, and the third ear of the ladies. I say this with all respect and with all honor, for physical reasons and for no others.

"Let us leave off singing," said Bertha; "it has too great an effect upon me. Come to the window; we can do needle-work until the evening."

"Ah, dear cousin of my soul! I don't know how to hold the needle in my fingers, having been accustomed, to my perdition, to do something else with them."

"Eh? what did you do then all day long?"

"Ah, I yielded to the current of love, which makes days seem instants, months seem days, and years months; and if it could last, would gulp down eternity like a strawberry, seeing that it is all youth and fragrance, sweetness and endless joy."

Then the youth dropped his beautiful eyelids over his eyes, and remained as melancholy as a poor lady who has been abandoned by her lover, who weeps for him, wishes to kiss him, and would pardon his perfidy, if he would but seek once again the sweet path to his once-loved fold.

"Cousin, does love blossom in the married state?"

"Oh no," said Sylvia; "because in the married state

everything is duty, but in love everything is done in perfect freedom of heart. This difference communicates an indescribable soft balm to those caresses which are the flowers of love."

"Cousin, let us change the conversation; it affects me more than did the music."

She called hastily to a servant to bring her boy to her, who came, and when Sylvia saw him, she exclaimed:

"Ah, the little dear, he is as beautiful as Love!"

Then she kissed him heartily upon the forehead.

"Come, my little one," said the mother, as the child clambered into her lap. "Thou art thy mother's blessing, her unclouded joy, the delight of her every hour, her crown, her jewel, her own pure pearl, her spotless soul, her treasure, her morning and evening star, her only flame and her heart's darling. Give me thy hands, that I may eat them; give me thine ears, that I may bite them; give me thy head, that I may kiss thy curls. Be happy, sweet flower of my body, that I may be happy too."

"Ah, cousin!" said Sylvia, "you are speaking the language of love to him."

"Love is a child then?"

"Yes, cousin; therefore the heathen always portrayed him as a little boy."

And with many other remarks fertile in the imagery of love the two pretty cousins amused themselves until supper-time, playing with the child.

"Would you not like to have another?" whispered Jehan, at an opportune moment, into his cousin's ear, which he touched with his warm lips.

"Ah, Sylvia! for that I would endure a hundred years of purgatory, if it would only please God to give me that joy. But in spite of the work, labor, and industry of my spouse, which causes me much pain, my waist does not vary in size. Alas! it is nothing to have but one child. If I hear the

sound of a cry in the castle, my heart beats ready to burst. I fear man and beast alike for this innocent darling ; I dread *voltes*,\* passes, and manual exercises ; in fact, I dread everything. I live not in myself, but in him alone. And, alas ! I like to endure these miseries, because while I fidget and tremble, it is a sign that my offspring is safe and sound. To be brief—for I am never weary of talking on this subject—I believe that my breath is in him and not in myself.”

With these words she hugged him to her breasts, as only mothers know how to hug children, with a spiritual force that is felt only in their hearts. If you doubt this, watch a cat carrying her kittens in her mouth ; not one of them gives a single mew. The youthful gallant, who had had certain fears about watering this fair, unfertile plain, was reassured by this speech. He thought then that it would only be following the commandments of God to win this saint to love ; and he thought rightly.

At night Bertha asked her cousin—according to the old custom, to which the ladies of our day object—to keep her company in her big seigneurial bed. To which request Sylvia replied—in order to keep up the rôle of a well-born maiden—that nothing would give her greater pleasure. The curfew rang and found the two cousins in a chamber richly ornamented with carpeting, fringes, and royal tapestries, and Bertha began gracefully to disarray herself, assisted by her women. You can imagine that her companion modestly declined their services, and told her cousin, with a little blush, that she was accustomed to undress herself ever since she had lost the services of her dearly beloved, who had put her out of conceit with feminine fingers by his gentle ways ; that these preparations brought back the pretty speeches he used to make, and his merry pranks while playing the lady’s maid ; and that to her injury, the memory of all these things brought

\* Volte (in old French)—to ride a horse side-on around a circle, the fore and hind feet forming parallel tracks.

the water into her mouth. This discourse considerably astonished the lady Bertha, who let her cousin say her prayers, and make her other preparations for the night beneath the curtains of the bed, into which my lord, inflamed with desire, soon tumbled, happy at being able to catch an occasional glimpse of the wondrous charms of the chatelaine, which were in no way injured.

Bertha, believing herself to be with an experienced girl, did not omit any of her usual practices ; she washed her feet, not minding whether she raised them little or much, exposed her delicate little shoulders, and did as all the ladies do when they are retiring to rest. At last she came to bed, and settled herself comfortably in it, kissing her cousin on the lips, which she found remarkably warm.

“Are you unwell, Sylvia, that you burn so ?” said she.

“I always burn like that when I go to bed,” replied her companion, “because at that time there comes back to my memory the pretty little tricks that he invented to please me, and which made me burn still more.”

“Ah, cousin, tell me all about this ‘he.’ Tell all the sweets of love to me, who live beneath the shadow of a hoary head, of which the snows keep me from such warm feelings. Tell me all ; you are cured. It will be a good warning to me, and thus your misfortunes will have been a salutary lesson to two poor weak women.”

“I do not know whether I ought to obey you, sweet cousin,” said the youth.

“Tell me why not.”

“Ah, deeds are better than words,” said the false maiden, heaving a sigh deep as the *ut* (C) of an organ. “But I am afraid that this milord has encumbered me with so much joy that you may get a little of it, enough, perhaps, to give you a daughter, since the power of engendering is weakened in me.”

“But,” said Bertha, “between us, would it be a sin ?”

“It would be, on the contrary, a joy both here and in

heaven; the angels would shed their fragrance around you, and make sweet music in your ears."

"Tell me quickly, then," said Bertha.

"Well, then, this is how my dear lord made my heart rejoice."

With these words Jehan took Bertha in his arms, and strained her hungering to his heart, for in the soft light of the lamp, and clothed with the spotless linen, she was, in this tempting bed, like the pretty petals of a lily at the bottom of the virgin calyx.

"When he held me as I hold thee he said to me, with a voice far sweeter than mine: 'Ah, Bertha, thou art my eternal love, my priceless treasure, my joy by day and my joy by night; thou art fairer than the day is day; there is naught so pretty as thou art. I love thee more than God, and would endure a thousand deaths for the happiness I ask of thee!' Then he would kiss me, not after the manner of husbands, which is rough, but in a peculiar dove-like fashion."

To show her there and then how much better was the method of lovers, he sucked all the honey from Bertha's lips, and taught her how, with her pretty tongue, small and rosy as that of a cat, she could speak to the heart without saying a single word, and becoming exhausted at this game, Jehan spread the fire of his kisses from the mouth to the neck, from the neck to the sweetest forms that ever a woman gave her child to slake its thirst upon. And whoever had been in his place would have thought himself a wicked man not to imitate him.

"Ah!" said Bertha, fast bound in love without knowing it; "this is better. I must take care to tell Imbert about it."

"Are you in your proper senses, cousin? Say nothing about it to your old husband. How could he make his hands pleasant like mine? They are as hard as a washwoman's beetles,\* and his piebald beard would hardly please this centre

\* A machine used for pounding clothes; it is also known as a "dolly."

of bliss, that rose in which lies our wealth, our substance, our loves, and our fortune. Do you know that it is a living flower, which should be fondled thus, and not used like a trombone, or as if it were a catapult of war?

“Now this was the sweet and gentle way of my beloved Englishman.”

Thus saying, the handsome youth comported himself so bravely in the battle that victory crowned his efforts, and poor innocent Bertha exclaimed :

“Ah ! cousin, the angels are come ! but so beautiful is their music, that I hear nothing else, and so flaming are their luminous rays, that my eyes are closing.”

And, indeed, she fainted under the burden of those joys of love which burst forth in her like the highest notes of the organ, which glistened like the most magnificent aurora, which flowed in her veins like the finest musk, and loosened the liens of her life in giving her a child of love, who made a great deal of confusion in taking up his quarters. Finally, Bertha imagined herself to be in paradise, so happy did she feel ; and woke from this beautiful dream in the arms of Jehan, exclaiming :

“Ah ! who would not have been married in England !”

“My sweet mistress,” said Jehan, whose ecstasy was soonest over, “you are married to me in France, where things are managed still better, for I am a man who would give a thousand lives for you if he had them.”

Poor Bertha gave a shriek so sharp that it pierced the walls, and leaped out of the bed like a mountebank of the plains of Egypt would have done. She fell upon her knees before her prie-Dieu, joined her hands, and wept more pearls than ever Mary Magdalen wore.

“Ah, I am dead !” she cried ; “I am deceived by a devil who has taken the face of an angel. I am lost ; I am the mother for certain of a beautiful child, without being more guilty than you, Madame the Virgin. Implore the pardon of

God for me, if I have not that of men upon earth; or let me die, so that I may not blush before my lord and master."

Hearing that she said nothing against him, Jehan rose, quite aghast to see Bertha take this charming dance for two so to heart. But the moment she heard her Gabriel moving she sprang quickly to her feet, regarded him with a tearful face, and, her eyes illumined with a holy anger, which made her more lovely to look upon, exclaimed:

"If you advance a single step toward me, I will make one toward death!"

And she took her stiletto in her hand.

So heart-rending was the tragic spectacle of her grief that Jehan answered her:

"It is not for thee but for me to die, my dear, beautiful mistress, more dearly loved than will ever woman be again upon this earth."

"If you had truly loved me you would not have killed me as you have, for I will die sooner than be reproached by my husband."

"Will you die?" said he.

"Assuredly," said she.

"Now, if I am here pierced with a thousand blows, you will have your husband's pardon, to whom you will say that if your innocence was surprised, you have avenged his honor by killing the man who had deceived you; and it will be the greatest happiness that could ever befall me to die for you, the moment you refuse to live with me."

Hearing this tender discourse spoken with tears, Bertha dropped the dagger; Jehan sprang upon it, and thrust it into his breast, saying:

"Such happiness can be paid for but with death."

And fell stiff and stark.

Bertha, terrified, called aloud for her maid. The servant came, and terribly alarmed to see a wounded man in madame's chamber, and madame holding him up, crying and saying,

“What have you done, my love?” because she believed he was dead, and remembered her vanished joys, and thought how beautiful Jehan must be, since every one, even Imbert, believed him to be a girl. In her sorrow she confessed all to her maid, sobbing and crying out, “that it was quite enough to have upon her mind the life of a child without having the death of a man as well.” Hearing this the poor lover tried to open his eyes, and only succeeded in showing a little bit of the white of them.

“Ha! madame, don’t cry out,” said the servant, “let us keep our senses together, and save this pretty knight. I will go and seek la Fallotte, in order not to let any physician or surgeon into this secret, and as she is a sorceress she will, to please madame, perform the miracle of healing this wound so that not a trace of it shall remain.”

“Run!” replied Bertha. “I will love you, and will pay you well for this assistance.”

But before anything else was done the lady and her maid agreed to be silent about this adventure, and to hide Jehan from every eye. Then the servant went out into the night to seek la Fallotte, and was accompanied by her mistress as far as the postern, because the guard could not raise the portcullis without Bertha’s special order. Bertha found on going back that her lover had fainted, for the blood was flowing from the wound. At this sight she drank a little of his blood, thinking that Jehan had shed it for her. Affected by this great love and by the danger, she kissed this pretty varlet of pleasure on the face, bound up his wound, bathing it with her tears, beseeching him not to die, and exclaiming that if he would live she would love him with all her heart.

You can imagine that the chatelaine became still more enamored while observing what a difference there was between a young knight like Jehan, white, downy, and agreeable, and an old fellow like Imbert, bristly, yellow, and wrinkled. This difference brought back to her memory that which she

had found in the pleasure of love. Moved by this memory, her kisses became so warm that Jehan came back to his senses, his look improved, and he could see Bertha, from whom in a feeble voice he asked forgiveness. But Bertha forbade him to speak until la Fallotte had arrived. Then both of them consumed the time by loving each other with their eyes, since in those of Bertha there was nothing but compassion, and on these occasions pity is akin to love.

La Fallotte was a hunchback, vehemently suspected of dealings in necromancy and of riding to nocturnal orgies on a broomstick, according to the custom of witches. Certain persons had seen her putting the harness on her broom in the stable, which, as every one knows, is on the housetops. To tell the truth she possessed certain medical secrets, and was of such great service to ladies, in certain things, and to the nobles, that she lived in perfect tranquillity without giving up the ghost on a pile of fagots, but on a feather bed, for she made a hatful of money, although the physicians tormented her by declaring that she sold poisons, which was certainly true, as will be shown in the sequel. The servant and la Fallotte came on the same ass, making such haste that they arrived at the castle before the day had fully dawned. The old hunchback exclaimed as she entered the chamber:

“Now, then, my children, what is the matter?”

This was her manner, which was familiar with great people, who appeared very small to her. She put on her spectacles, and carefully examined the wound, saying:

“This is fine blood, my dear; you have tasted it. That’s all right, he has bled externally.”

Then she washed the wound with a fine sponge, under the nose of the lady and the servant, who held their breath. To be brief, la Fallotte gave it as her medical opinion that the youth would not die from this blow, “although,” said she, looking at his hand, “he will come to a violent end through this night’s deed.”

This decree of chiromancy frightened considerably both Bertha and the maid. La Fallotte prescribed certain remedies and promised to come again the following night. Indeed, she tended the wound for a whole fortnight, coming secretly at night-time. The people about the castle were told by the servant that the young lady, Sylvia de Rohan, was in danger of death, through a swelling of the stomach, which must remain a mystery for the honor of madame, who was her cousin. Each one was satisfied by this story, of which his mouth was so full that he told it to his fellows.

The good people believed that it was the malady which was fraught with danger ; but it was not ! it was the convalescence, for the stronger Jehan grew, the weaker Bertha became, and so weak that she allowed herself to drift into that paradise the gates of which Jehan had opened for her. To be brief, she loved him more and more. But in the midst of her happiness, always associated by apprehension at the menacing words of la Fallotte, and tormented by her great religion, she was in great fear of her husband, Imbert, to whom she was compelled to write that he had given her a child, who would be ready to delight him on his return. Poor Bertha avoided her lover, Jehan, during the day on which she wrote the lying letter, over which she soaked her handkerchief with tears.

Finding himself avoided (for they had previously left each other no more than fire leaves the wood it has bitten) Jehan believed that she was beginning to hate him, and straightway he cried too. In the evening Bertha, touched by his tears, which had left their mark upon his eyes, although he had well dried them, told him the cause of her sorrow, mingling therewith the confession of her terrors for the future, pointing out to him how much they were both to blame, and discoursing so beautifully to him, gave utterance to such Christian sentences, ornamented with holy tears and contrite prayers, that Jehan was touched to the quick by the sincerity of his mistress. This love innocently united to repentance, this nobility in sin,

this mixture of weakness and strength, would, as the old authors say, have changed the nature of a tiger, melting it to pity. You will not be astonished, then, that Jehan was compelled to pledge his word as a knight-bachelor to obey her in whatever she should command him, to save her in this world and in the next. Delighted at this confidence in her, and this goodness of heart, Bertha cast herself at Jehan's feet, and, kissing them, exclaimed :

“ Oh, my love ! whom I am compelled to love, although it is a mortal sin so to do, thou who art so good, so gentle to thy poor Bertha, if thou wouldest have her always think of thee with pleasure, and stop the torrent of her tears, whose source is so pretty and so pleasant (here, to show him that it was so, she let him steal a kiss)—Jehan, if thou wouldest that the memory of our celestial joys, angel music, and the fragrance of love should be a consolation to me in my loneliness rather than a torment, do that which the Virgin commanded me to order thee in a dream, in which I was beseeching her to direct me in the present case, for I had asked her to come to me, and she had come.

“ Then I told her the horrible anguish I should endure, trembling for this little one, whose movements I already feel, and for the real father, who would be at the mercy of the other, and might expiate his paternity by a violent death, since it is possible that la Fallotte saw clearly into his future life. Then the beautiful Virgin told me, smiling, that the church offered its forgiveness for our faults if we followed her commandments; that it was necessary to save one's self from the pains of hell, by reforming before heaven became angry. Then with her finger she showed me a Jehan like thee, but dressed as thou shouldst be, and as thou wilt be, if thou dost but love thy Bertha with a love eternal.”

Jehan assured her of his perfect obedience, and raised her, seating her on his knee, and kissing her. The unhappy Bertha told him then that this garment was a monk's frock, and

tremblingly besought him—almost fearing a refusal—to enter the church, and retire to Marmoustier, beyond Tours, pledging him her word that she would grant him a last night, after which she would be neither for him nor for any one else in the world again. And each year, as a reward for this, she would let him come to her one day, in order that he might see his child.

Jehan, bound by his oath, promised to obey his mistress, saying that by this means he would be faithful to her, and would experience no joys of love but those tasted in her divine embrace, and would live upon the dear remembrance of them. Hearing these sweet words, Bertha declared to him that, however great might have been her sin, and whatever God reserved for her, this happiness would enable her to support it, since she believed she had not fallen through a man, but through an angel.

Then they returned to the nest which contained their love, but only to bid a final adieu to all their lovely flowers. There can be but little doubt that Seigneur Cupid had something to do with this festival, for no woman ever experienced such joy in any part of the world before, and no man ever took as much. The especial property of true love is a certain harmony, which brings it about that the more one gives, the more the other receives, and *vice versa*, as in certain cases in mathematics, where things are multiplied by themselves without end. This problem can only be explained to unscientific people, by asking them to look in their Venetian\* glasses, in which are to be seen thousands of faces produced by one alone. Thus, in the hearts of two lovers, the roses of pleasure multiply within them in a manner which causes them to be astonished that so much joy can be contained, without anything bursting. Bertha and Jehan would have wished in this night to have finished their days, and thought, from the excessive languor which flowed in their veins, that love had resolved to bear

\* Multiplying mirrors.

them away on his wings with the kiss of death ; but they held out in spite of these numerous multiplications.

On the morrow, as the return of Monsieur Imbert de Bastarnay was close at hand, the lady Sylvia was compelled to depart. The poor girl left her cousin, covering her with tears and with kisses ; it was always her last, but the last lasted till evening. Then he was compelled to leave her, and he did leave her, although the blood of his heart congealed, like the fallen wax of a Paschal candle. According to his promise, he wended his way toward Marmoustier, which he entered toward the eleventh hour of the day, and was placed among the novices. Monseigneur de Bastarnay was informed that Sylvia had returned to the Lord, which is the signification of *le Seigneur* in the English language ; and therefore in this Bertha did not lie.

The joy of her husband, when he saw Bertha without her waistband—she could not wear it, so much had she increased in size—commenced the martyrdom of this poor woman, who did not know how to deceive, and who, at each false word, went to her prie-Dieu, wept her blood away from her eyes in tears, burst into prayers, and recommended herself to the graces of Messieurs the Saints in paradise. It happened that she cried so loudly to God that He heard her, because He hears everything ; He hears the stones that roll beneath the waters, the poor who groan, and the flies who wing their way through the air. It is as well that you should know this, otherwise you would not believe in what happened. God commanded the archangel Michael to make for this penitent a hell upon earth, so that she might enter without dispute into paradise.

Then St. Michael descended from the skies as far as the gate of hell, and handed over this triple soul to the devil, telling him that he had permission to torment it during the rest of her days, at the same time indicating to him Bertha, Jehan, and the child. The devil, who by the will of God

is lord of all evil, told the archangel that he would obey the message. During this heavenly arrangement life went on as usual here below. The sweet lady of Bastarnay gave the most beautiful child in the world to the Sire Imbert—a boy all lilies and roses, of great intelligence, like a little Jesus, merry and arch as a pagan love. He became more beautiful day by day, while the elder was turning to an ape, like his father, whom he painfully resembled. The younger boy was as bright as a star, and resembled his father and mother, whose corporeal and spiritual perfections had produced a compound of illustrious graces and marvelous intelligence.

Seeing this perpetual miracle of body and mind blended with the essential conditions, Bastarnay declared that for his eternal salvation he would like to make the younger the elder, and that he would do so with the King's protection. Bertha did not know what to do, for she adored the child of Jehan, and could only feel a feeble affection for the other, whom, nevertheless, she protected against the evil intentions of the old fellow Bastarnay. Bertha, satisfied with the way things were going, quieted her conscience with falsehood, and thought that all danger was past, since twelve years had elapsed with no other alloy than the doubt which at times embittered her joy.

Each year, according to her pledged faith, the monk of Marmoustier, who was unknown to every one except the servant-maid, came to pass a whole day at the castle to see his child, although Bertha had many times besought Brother Jehan to yield his right. But Jehan pointed to the child, saying :

“ You see him every day of the year, and I only once ! ” And the poor mother could find no words ready with which to answer this speech.

A few months before the last rebellion of the Dauphin Louis against his father, the boy was treading closely on the

heels of his twelfth year, and appeared likely to become a great savant, so learned was he in all the sciences. Old Bastarnay had never been more delighted at having been a father in his life, and resolved to take his son with him to the Court of Burgundy, where Duke Charles promised to make for this well-beloved son a position, which should be the envy of princes, for he was not at all averse to clever people. Seeing matters thus arranged, the devil judged the time to be ripe for his mischiefs. He took his tail and flapped it right into the middle of this happiness, so that he could stir it up in his own peculiar way.



### III.

#### HORRIBLE CHASTISEMENT OF BERTHA AND EXPIATION OF THE SAME, WHO DIED PARDONED.

The servant of the lady of Bastarnay, who was then about five-and-thirty years old, fell in love with one of the master's men-at-arms, and was silly enough to let him take loaves out of the oven, until there resulted therefrom a natural swelling, which certain wags in these parts call a nine month's dropsy. The poor woman begged her mistress to intercede for her with the master, so that he might compel this wicked man to finish at the altar that which he had commenced elsewhere. Madame de Bastarnay had no difficulty in obtaining this favor from him, and the servant was quite satisfied.

But the old warrior, who was always extremely rough, hastened into his pretorium, and blew him up sky high, ordering him, under the pain of the gallows, to marry the girl ; which the soldier preferred to do, thinking more of his neck than of his peace of mind. Bastarnay sent also for the female, to whom he imagined, for the honor of his house, he ought to sing a litany, mixed with epithets and ornamented with extremely strong expressions, and make her think, by way of punishment, that she was not going to be married, but flung into one of the cells in the jail. The girl fancied that madame wanted to get rid of her, in order to inter the secret of the birth of her beloved son. With this impression, when the old ape said such outrageous things to her—namely, that he must have been a fool to keep a harlot in his house—she replied that he certainly was a very big fool, seeing that for a long time past his wife had been playing the harlot, and with

a monk, too, which was the worst thing that could happen to a warrior.

Think of the greatest storm you ever saw in your life, and you will have a weak sketch of the furious rage into which the old man fell, when thus assailed in a portion of his heart where was a triple life. He seized the girl by the throat, and would have killed her there and then, but she, to prove her story, detailed the how, the why, and the when, and said that if he had no faith in her, he could have the evidence of his own ears by hiding himself the day that Father Jehan de Sacchez, the prior of Marmoustier, came. He would then hear the words of the father, who solaced himself for his year's fast, and in one day kissed his son for the rest of the year. Imbert ordered this woman instantly to leave the castle, since, if her accusation were true, he would kill her just as though she had invented a tissue of lies. In an instant he had given her a hundred crowns, beside her man, enjoining them not to sleep in Touraine; and, for greater security, they were conducted into Burgundy, by de Bastarnay's officers.

He informed his wife of their departure, saying that as her servant was a damaged article he had thought it best to get rid of her, but had given her a hundred crowns, and found employment for the man at the Court of Burgundy. Bertha was astonished to learn that her maid had left the castle without receiving her dismissal from herself, her mistress; but she said nothing. Soon afterward she had other fish to fry, for she became a prey to vague apprehensions, because her husband completely changed in his manner, commenced to notice the likeness of his first-born to himself, and could find nothing resembling his nose, or his forehead, his this, or his that, in the youngster he loved so well.

“He is my very image,” replied Bertha one day that he was throwing out these hints. “Know you not that, in well-regulated households, children are formed from the father and mother, each in turn, or often from both together, because

the mother mingles her qualities with the vital force of the father? Some physicians declare that they have known many children born without any resemblance to either father or mother, and attribute these mysteries to the whim of the Almighty."

"You have become very learned, my dear," replied Bастарнай; "but I, who am an ignoramus, I should fancy that a child who resembled a monk——"

"Had a monk for a father?" asked Bertha, looking at him with an unflinching gaze, although ice rather than blood was coursing through her veins.

The old fellow thought he was mistaken, and cursed the servant; but he was none the less determined to make sure of the affair. As the day of Father Jehan's visit was close at hand, Bertha, whose suspicions were aroused by this speech, wrote him that it was her wish that he should not come this year, without, however, telling him her reason; then she went in search of la Fallotte at Loches, who was to give her letter to Jehan, and believed everything was safe for the present. She was all the more pleased at having written her friend the prior, when Imbert, who, toward the time appointed for the poor monk's annual treat, had always been accustomed to take a journey into the province of Maine, where he had considerable property, remained this time at home, giving as his reason the preparations for rebellion which Monseigneur Louis was then making against his father, who, as every one knows, was so cut up at this revolt that it caused his death. This reason was such a good one that poor Bertha was quite satisfied with it, and did not trouble herself. On the regular day, however, the prior arrived as usual. Bertha, seeing him, turned pale, and asked him if he had not received her message.

"What message?" said Jehan.

"Ah! we are lost, then; the child, thou, and I," replied Bertha.

“Why so?” said the prior.

“I know not,” said she; “but our last day has come.”

She inquired of her dearly beloved son where Bastarnay was. The young man told her that his father had been sent for by special messenger to Loches, and would not be back until evening. Thereupon Jehan wished, in spite of his mistress, to remain with her and his dear son, asserting that no harm would come of it, after the lapse of twelve years, since the birth of their boy. The days when that adventurous night you wot of was celebrated, Bertha stayed in her room with the poor monk until supper-time. But on this occasion the lovers—hastened by the apprehensions of Bertha, which were shared by Jehan directly she had informed him of them—dined immediately, although the prior of Marmoustier reassured Bertha by pointing out to her the privileges of the church, and how Bastarnay, already in bad odor at Court, would be afraid to attack a dignitary of Marmoustier.

When they were sitting down to table their little one happened to be playing, and, in spite of the reiterated prayers of his mother, would not stop his games, since he was galloping about the courtyard on a fine Spanish barb, which Duke Charles of Burgundy had presented to Bastarnay. And because young lads like to show off, varlets make themselves bachelors-at-arms, and bachelors wish to play the knight, this boy was delighted at being able to show the monk what a man he was becoming; he made the horse jump like a flea in the bedclothes, and sat as steady as a trooper in the saddle.

“Let him have his way, my darling,” said the monk to Bertha. “Disobedient children often become great characters.”

Bertha ate sparingly, for her heart was as swollen as a sponge in water. At the first mouthful, the monk, who was a great scholar, felt in his stomach a pain, and on his palate a bitter taste of poison that caused him to suspect that the Sire de Bastarnay had given them all their quietus. Before

he had made this discovery Bertha had eaten. Suddenly the monk pulled off the tablecloth and flung everything into the fireplace, telling Bertha his suspicion. Bertha thanked the Virgin that her son had been so taken up with his sport. Retaining his presence of mind, Jehan, who had not forgotten the lesson he had learned as a page, leaped into the courtyard, lifted his son from the horse, sprang across it himself, and flew across the country with such speed that you would have thought him a shooting-star if you had seen him digging the spurs into the horse's bleeding flanks, and he was at Loches in la Fallotte's house in the same space of time that only the devil could have done the journey. He stated the case to her in two words, for the poison was already frying his marrow, and requested her to give him an antidote.

"Alas," said the sorceress, "had I known that it was for you I was giving this poison, I would have received in my breast the dagger's point, with which I was threatened, and would have sacrificed my poor life to save that of a man of God, and of the sweetest woman that ever blossomed on this earth; for, alas! my dear friend, I have only two drops of the counter-poison that you see in this phial."

"Is there enough for her?"

"Yes; but go at once," said the old hag.

The monk came back more quickly than he went, so that the horse died under him in the courtyard. He rushed into the room where Bertha, believing her last hour to be come, was kissing her son, and writhing like a lizard in the fire, uttering no cry for herself, but for the child, left to the wrath of Bastarnay, forgetting her own agony at the thought of his cruel future.

"Take this," said the monk; "my life is saved!"

Jehan had the great courage to say these words with an unmoved face, although he felt the claws of death seizing his heart. Hardly had Bertha drunk when the prior fell dead, not, however, without kissing his son, and regarding his dear

lady with an eye that changed not even after his last sigh. This sight turned her cold as marble, and terrified her so much that she remained rigid before this dead man, stretched at her feet, pressing the hand of her child, who wept, although her own eye was as dry as the Red Sea when the Hebrews crossed it under the leadership of Baron Moses, for it seemed to her that she had sharp sand rolling under her eyelids.

Pray for her, ye charitable souls, for never was woman so agonized, in divining that her lover had saved her life at the expense of his own.

Aided by her son, she herself placed the monk in the middle of the bed, and stood by the side of it, praying with the boy, whom she then told that the prior was his true father. In this state she waited her evil hour, and her evil time did not take long in coming, for toward the eleventh hour Bastarnay arrived, and was informed at the portcullis that the monk was dead, and not madame and the child, and he saw his beautiful Spanish horse lying dead. Thereupon, seized with a furious desire to slay Bertha and the monk's bastard, he sprang up the stairs with one bound ; but at the sight of this corpse, for whom his wife and her son repeated incessant litanies, having no ears for his torrents of invective, having no eyes for his writhings and threats, he had no longer the courage to perpetrate this dark deed. After the first fury of his rage had passed, he could not bring himself to it, and quitted the room like a coward and a man taken in crime, stung to the quick by those prayers continuously said for the monk.

The night was passed in tears, groans, and prayers. By an express order from madame, her servant had been to Loches to purchase for her the attire of a young lady of quality, and for her poor child a horse and the arms of an esquire ; noticing which, the Sieur de Bastarnay was much astonished. He sent for madame and the monk's son, but neither mother nor child returned any answer, but quietly put on the clothes purchased by the servant. By madame's order this servant made

up the account of her effects, arranged her clothes, purples, jewels, and diamonds, as the property of a widow is arranged when she renounces her rights. Bertha ordered even her alms-purse to be included, in order that the ceremony might be perfect. The report of these preparations ran through the house, and every one knew then that the mistress was about to leave it—a circumstance that filled every heart with sorrow, even that of a little scullion, who had only been a week in the place, but to whom madame had already given a kind word.

Frightened at these preparations, old Bastarnay came into her chamber, and found her weeping over the body of Jehan, for her tears had come at last; but she dried them directly she perceived her husband. To his numerous questions she replied briefly by the confession of her fault, telling him how she had been duped, how the poor page had been distressed, showing him upon the corpse the mark of the poniard wound; how long he had been getting well; and how, in obedience to her, and from penitence toward God and man, he had entered the church, abandoning the glorious career of a knight, putting an end to his name, which was certainly worse than death; how she, while avenging her honor, had thought that even God Himself would not have refused the monk one day in the year to see the son for whom he sacrificed everything; how, not wishing to live with a murderer, she was about to quit his house, leaving all her property behind her, because if the honor of the Bastarnays was stained, it was not she who had brought the shame about; because in this calamity she had arranged matters as best she could; finally, she added a vow to go over mountain and valley, she and her son, until all was expiated, for she knew how to expiate all.

Having with noble mien and a pale face uttered these beautiful words, she took her child by the hand and went out in great mourning, more magnificently beautiful than was Mademoiselle Hagar on her departure from the residence of the patriarch Abraham, and so proudly, that all the servants and

retainers fell on their knees as she passed along, imploring her with joined hands, like *Notre-Dame de la Riche*. It was pitiful to see the Sieur de Bastarnay following her, ashamed, weeping, confessing himself to blame, and downcast and despairing, like a man being led to the gallows, there to be turned off.

Bertha turned a deaf ear to everything. The desolation was so great that she found the drawbridge lowered, and hastened to quit the castle, fearing that it might be suddenly raised again ; but no one had the right or the heart to do it. She sat down on the curb of the moat, in view of the whole castle, who begged her, with tears, to stay. 'The poor knight was standing with his hand upon the chain of the portcullis, as silent as the stone saints carved above the door. He saw Bertha order her son to shake the dust from his shoes at the end of the bridge, in order to have nothing belonging to Bastarnay about him ; and she did likewise. Then, indicating the knight to her son with her finger, she spake to him as follows :

" Child, behold the murderer of thy father, who was, as thou art aware, the poor prior ; but thou hast taken the name of this man. Give it him back here, even as thou leavest the dust taken by thy shoes from his castle. For the food that thou hast had in the castle, by God's help, we will also settle."

Hearing this, Bastarnay would have let his wife receive a whole monastery of monks in order not to be abandoned by her, and by a young squire capable of becoming the honor of his house, and remained with his hand sunk down against the chains.

The heart of Bertha was suddenly filled with holy solace, for the banner of the great monastery turned the corner of a road across the fields, and appeared accompanied by the chants of the church, which burst forth like heavenly music. The monks, informed of the murder perpetrated on their well-beloved prior, came in procession, assisted by the ecclesiastical

justice, to claim his body. When he saw this, the Sire de Bastarnay had barely the time to make for the postern with his men, and set out toward Monseigneur Louis, leaving everything in confusion.

Poor Bertha, *en croupe* behind her son, came to Montbazon to bid her father farewell, telling him that this blow would be her death, and was consoled by those of her family who endeavored to raise her spirits but were unable to do so. The old Sire de Rohan presented his grandson with a splendid suit of armor, telling him so to acquire glory and honor that he might turn his mother's faults into eternal renown. But Madame de Bastarnay had implanted in the mind of her dear son no other idea than of atoning for the harm done, in order to save her and Jehan from eternal damnation. Both then set out for the places then in a state of rebellion, in order to render such services to Bastarnay that he would receive from them more than life itself.

Now the heat of the sedition was, as every one knows, in the neighborhood of Angoulême, and of Bordeaux in Guienne and other parts of the kingdom, where great battles and severe conflicts between the rebels and the royal armies were likely to take place. The principal one which finished the war was given between Ruffec and Angoulême, where all the prisoners taken were tried and hanged. This battle, commanded by old Bastarnay, took place in the month of November, seven months after the poisoning of Jehan. Now, the baron knew that his head had been strongly recommended as one to be cut off, he being the right hand of Monseigneur Louis. Directly his men began to fall back, the old fellow found himself surrounded by six men determined to seize him. Then he understood that they wished to take him alive, in order to proceed against his house, ruin his name, and confiscate his property.

The poor knight preferred rather to die and save his family, and present the domains to his son. He defended himself,

like the brave old lion that he was. In spite of their number, these said soldiers, seeing three of their comrades fall, were obliged to attack Bastarnay at the risk of killing him, and threw themselves together upon him, after having laid low two of his esquires and a page. In this extreme danger an esquire wearing the arms of Rohan, fell upon the assailants like a thunderbolt, and killed two of them, crying :

“ God save the Bastarnays ! ”

The third man-at-arms, who had already seized old Bastarnay, was so hard pressed by this squire, that he was obliged to leave the elder and turn against the younger, to whom he gave a thrust with his dagger through a flaw in his armor. Bastarnay was too good a comrade to fly without assisting the liberator of his house, who was badly wounded. With a blow of his mace he killed the man-at-arms, seized the squire, lifted him on to his horse, and gained the open, accompanied by a guide, who led him to the castle of Roche-Foucauld, which he entered by night, and found in the great room Bertha de Rohan, who had arranged this retreat for him. But on removing the helmet of his prisoner, he recognized the son of Jehan, who expired upon the table, by a final effort kissing his mother, and saying in a loud voice to her :

“ Mother, we have paid the debt we owed him ! ”

Hearing these words the mother clasped the body of her love-child to her heart, and separated from him never again, for she died of grief, without hearing or heeding the pardon and repentance of Bastarnay.

This strange calamity hastened the last day of the poor old man, who did not live to see the coronation of King Louis the Eleventh. He founded a daily mass in the church of Roche-Foucauld, where in the same grave he placed mother and son, with a large tombstone, upon which their lives are much honored in the Latin language.

The moral which any one can deduce from this history is most profitable for the conduct of life, since this shows

how gentlemen should be courteous with those dearly beloved of their wives. Further, it teaches us that all children are blessings sent by God Himself, and over them fathers, whether true or false, have no right of murder, as was formerly the case at Rome, owing to a heathen and abominable law, which ill became that Christianity which makes us all sons of God.



## HOW THE CHATEAU D'AZAY CAME TO BE BUILT.

JEHAN, son of Simon Fourniez, called Simonnin, a citizen of Tours—originally of the village of Moulinot, near to Beaune, whence, in imitation of certain persons, he took the name when he became steward to Louis XI.—had to fly one day into Languedoc with his wife, having fallen into great disgrace, and left his son Jacques penniless in Touraine. This youth, who possessed nothing in the world except his good looks, his sword, and spurs, but whom wornout old men would have considered very well off, had in his head a firm intention to save his father and make his fortune at the Court, then holden in Touraine. At early dawn this good Tourangeau left his lodging, and, enveloped in his mantle, all except his nose, which he left open to the air, and his stomach empty, walked about the town without any trouble of digestion. He entered the churches, thought them beautiful, looked into the chapels, flicked the flies from the pictures, and counted the columns, all after the manner of a man who knows not what to do with his time or his money. At other times he feigned to recite his paternosters, but really made mute prayers to the ladies, offered them holy water when leaving, followed them afar off, and endeavored by these little services to encounter some adventure, in which at the peril of his life he would find for himself a protector or a gracious mistress.

He had in his girdle two doubloons, which he spared far more than his skin, because that would be replaced, but the doubloons never. Each day he took from his little hoard the price of a roll and a few apples, with which he sustained life, and drank at his will and discretion of the water of the Loire.

This wholesome and prudent diet, beside being good for his doubloons, kept him frisky and light as a greyhound, gave him a clear understanding and a warm heart, for the water of the Loire is of all syrups the most strengthening, because having its course afar off it is invigorated by its long run, through many strands, before it reaches Tours. So you may be sure that the poor fellow imagined a thousand and one good fortunes and lucky adventures, and what is more, almost believed them true. Oh ! the good times !

One evening Jacques de Beaune (he kept the name although he was not lord of Beaune) was walking along the embankment, occupied in cursing his star and everything, for his last doubloon was with scant respect upon the point of quitting him, when at the corner of a little street he nearly ran against a veiled lady, whose sweet odor gratified his amorous senses. This fair pedestrian was bravely mounted on pretty pattens,\* wore a beautiful dress of Italian velvet, with wide, slashed satin sleeves ; while, as a sign of her great fortune, through her veil a white diamond of reasonable size shone upon her forehead like the rays of the setting sun among her tresses, which were so delicately rolled, built up, and so neat, that they must have taken her maids quite three hours to arrange. She walked like a lady who was only accustomed to a litter. One of her pages followed her, well armed. She evidently was some light o' love belonging to a noble of high rank, or a lady of the court, since she held her dress high off the ground, and bent her back like a woman of quality.

Lady or courtesan, she pleased Jacques de Beaune, who, far from turning up his nose at her, conceived the wild idea of attaching himself to her for life. With this in view he determined to follow her in order to ascertain whither she would lead him—to Paradise or to limbo of hell—to a gibbet or to an abode of love. Anything was a gleam of hope to him in

\* Wooden soles, secured to the feet with a strap, having rings of iron on the under side to elevate the wearer above the mud and slush.

the depth of his misery. The lady strolled along the bank of the Loire toward Plessis, inhaling the air like a fish the fine freshness of the water, toying, sauntering like a little mouse who wishes to see and taste everything. When the page perceived that Jacques de Beaune persistently followed his mistress in all her movements, stopped when she stopped, and watched her trifling, in a barefaced fashion, as if he had a right so to do, he turned brusquely round with a savage and threatening face, like that of a dog who says: "Stand back, sir!"

But the good Tourangeau had his wits about him. Believing that if a cat may look at a king, he, a baptized Christian, might certainly look at a pretty woman, he stepped forward, and, feigning to grin at the page, he strutted now behind and now before the lady. She said nothing, but looked at the sky, which was putting on its nightcap, the stars, and everything which could give her pleasure. So things went on. At last, arrived opposite Portillon, she stood still, and, in order to see better, cast her veil back over her shoulder, and in so doing cast upon the youth the glance of a clever woman who looks around to see if there is any danger of being robbed.

I may tell you that Jacques de Beaune, a thorough lady's man, could walk by the side of a princess without disgracing her, had a brave and resolute air which pleased the sex, and if he was a little browned by the sun from being so much in the open air, his skin would look white enough under the canopy of a bed. The glance, keen as a needle, which the lady threw him, appeared to him more animated than that with which she would have honored her prayer-book. Upon it he built the hope of a windfall of love, and resolved to push the adventure to the very edge of the petticoat, risking to go still further, not only his lips, which he held of little account, but his two ears and something else beside. He followed into the town the lady, who returned by the Rue des Trois-Pucelles,

and led the gallant through a labyrinth of little streets, to the square in which is at the present time situated the Hôtel de la Crouzille. There she stopped at the door of a splendid mansion, at which the page knocked. A servant opened it, and the lady went in and closed the door, leaving the Sieur de Beaune open-mouthed, stupefied, and as foolish as Monseigneur St. Denys\* when he was trying to pick up his head.

He raised his nose in the air to see if some token of favor would be thrown him, and saw nothing except a light which went up the stairs, through the rooms, and rested before a fine window, where probably the lady was also. You can believe that the poor lover remained melancholy and dreaming, and knowing not what to do.

The window gave a sudden creak and broke his reverie. Fancying that his lady was about to call him, he looked up again, and, but for the friendly shelter of the balcony, which was a helmet to him, he would have received a stream of water and the utensil which contained it, since the handle only remained in the grasp of the person who delivered the deluge. Jacques de Beaune, delighted at this, did not lose the opportunity, but flung himself against the wall, crying: "I am killed," with a feeble voice. Then stretching himself upon the fragments of broken china, he lay as if dead, awaiting the issue. The servants rushed out in a state of alarm, fearing their mistress, to whom they had confessed their fault, and picked up the wounded man, who could hardly restrain his laughter at being then carried up the stairs.

"He is cold," said the page.

"He is covered with blood," said the butler, who while feeling his pulse had wetted his hand.

"If he revives," said the guilty one, "I will pay for a mass to Saint Gatien."

"Madame takes after her late father, and if she does not have thee hanged, the least mitigation of thy penalty will be

\* Whom, tradition has it, after his martyrdom, carried his head six miles.

that thou wilt be kicked out of her house and service," said another. "Certes, he's dead enough, he is so heavy."

"Ah! I am in the house of a very great lady," thought Jacques.

"Alas! is he really dead?" demanded the author of the calamity. While with great labor the Tourangeau was being carried up the stairs, his doublet caught on a projection, and the dead man cried:

"Ah, my doublet!"

"He groans," said the culprit, with a sigh of relief.

The Regent's servants (for this was the house of the Regent, the daughter of King Louis XI. of virtuous memory) brought Jacques de Beaune into a room, and laid him stiff and stark upon a table, not thinking for a moment that he could be saved.

"Run and fetch a surgeon," cried Madame de Beaujeu.  
"Run here, run there!"

The servants were down stairs in a trice. The good lady Regent dispatched her attendants for ointment, for linen to bind the wounds, for goulard-water, for so many things, that she remained alone. Gazing upon this splendid and senseless man, she cried aloud, admiring his presence and his features, handsome even in death:

"Ah, God wishes to punish me. Just for one poor little time in my life has there been born in me, and taken possession of me, a naughty idea, and my patron saint is angry, and deprives me of the sweetest gentleman I have ever seen. By the rood, and by the soul of my father, I will hang every man who had a hand in this!"

"Madame," cried Jacques de Beaune, springing from the table, and falling at the feet of the Regent, "I will live to serve you, and am so little bruised that I promise you this night as many joys as there are months in the year, in imitation of the Sieur Hercules, a pagan baron. For the last twenty days," he went on (thinking that matters would be smoothed

by a little lying), "I have met you again and again. I fell madly in love with you, yet dared not, by reason of my great respect for your person, make an advance. You can imagine how intoxicated I must have been with your royal beauties, to have invented the trick to which I owe the happiness of being at your feet."

Thereupon he kissed her amorously, and gave her a look that would overcome any scruples. The Regent, by means of time, which respects not queens, was, as every one knows, in her middle age. In this critical and autumnal season, women formerly virtuous and loverless desire now here, now there, to enjoy, unknown to the world, certain hours of love, in order that they may not arrive in the other world with hands and hearts alike empty, through having left the fruit of the tree of knowledge untasted. The lady of Beaujeu, without appearing to be astonished while listening to the promises of this young man, since royal personages ought to be accustomed to having them by dozens, kept this ambitious speech in the depths of her memory, or of her registry of love, which caught fire at his words. Then she raised the Tourangeau, who still found in his misery the courage to smile at his mistress, who had the majesty of a full-blown rose, ears like shoes, and the complexion of a sick cat, but was so well dressed, so fine in figure, so royal of foot, and so queenly in carriage, that he might still find in this affair means to gain his original object.

"Who are you?" said the Regent, putting on the stern look of her father.

"I am your very faithful subject, Jacques de Beaune, son of your steward, who has fallen into disgrace in spite of his faithful services."

"Ah, well," replied the lady, "lay yourself on the table again. I hear some one coming; and it is not fit that my people should think me your accomplice in this farce and mummery."

The good fellow perceived, by the soft sound of her voice, that he was pardoned the enormity of his love. He lay down upon the table again, and remembered how certain lords had ridden to Court in an old stirrup—a thought which perfectly reconciled him to his present position.

“Good,” said the Regent to her maidservants; “nothing is needed. This gentleman is better; thanks to heaven and the Holy Virgin, there will have been no murder in my house.”

Thus saying, she passed her hand through the locks of the lover who had fallen to her from the skies, and taking a little reviving water she bathed his temples, undid his doublet, and, under pretense of aiding his recovery, verified better than an expert how soft and young was the skin of this young fellow and bold promiser of bliss, and all the bystanders, men and women, were amazed to see the Regent act thus. But humanity never misbecomes those of royal blood. Jacques stood up, and appeared to come to his senses, thanked the Regent most humbly, and dismissed the physicians, master-surgeons, and other imps in black, saying that he had thoroughly recovered.

Then he gave his name, and, saluting Madame de Beaujeu, wished to depart, as though afraid of her on account of his father’s disgrace, but no doubt horrified at what he considered his terrible vow.

“I cannot permit it,” said she. “Persons who come to my house should not meet with such treatment as you have encountered. The Sieur de Beaune will sup here,” she added to her major-domo. “He who has so unduly insulted him will be at his mercy if he makes himself known immediately; otherwise, I will have him found out and hanged by the provost.”

Hearing this, the page who had attended the lady during her promenade stepped forward.

“Madame,” said Jacques, “at my request pray both pardon and reward him, since to him I owe the felicity of seeing

you, the favor of supping in your company, and perhaps that of getting my father re-established in the office to which it pleased your glorious father to appoint him."

"Well said," replied the Regent. "D'Estouteville," said she, turning toward the page, "I give thee command of a company of archers. But for the future do not throw things out of the window."

Then she, delighted with de Beaune, offered him her hand, and led him most gallantly into her room, where they conversed freely together while supper was being prepared. There the Sieur Jacques did not fail to exhibit his talents, justify his father, and raise himself in the estimation of the lady, who, as is well known, was like her father in disposition, and did everything at random. Jacques de Baune thought to himself that it would be rather difficult for him to remain all night with the Regent. Such matters are not so easily arranged as the amours of cats, who have always a convenient refuge upon the housetops for their moments of dalliance. So he rejoiced that he was known to the Regent without being compelled to fulfill his rash promise, since for this to be carried out it was necessary that the servants and others should be out of the way, and her reputation safe. Nevertheless, suspecting the powers of intrigue of the good lady, at times he would ask himself if he were equal to the task. But beneath the surface of conversation, the same thing was in the mind of the Regent, who had already managed affairs quite as difficult, and she began most cleverly to arrange the means. She sent for one of her secretaries, an adept in all arts necessary for the perfect government of a kingdom, and ordered him to give her secretly a false message during supper.

Then came the repast, which the lady did not touch, since her heart had swollen like a sponge and so diminished her stomach, for she kept thinking of this handsome and desirable man, having no appetite save for him. Jacques did not fail to make a good meal for many reasons. The messenger came,

madame began to storm, to knit her brows after the manner of the late King, and to say :

“ Is there never to be peace in this land ? *Pasques Dieu !* can we not have one quiet evening ? ”

Then she arose, and strode about the room.

“ Ho there ! my horse ! Where is Monsieur de Vieilleville, my squire ? Ah, he is in Picardy. D’Estouteville, you will rejoin me with my household at the Château d’Amboise—— ” And looking at Jacques, she said : “ You shall be my squire, Sieur de Beaune. You wish to serve the State. The occasion is a good one. *Pasques Dieu !* come. There are rebels to subdue, and faithful knights are needed.”

In less time than an old beggar would have taken to say thank you, the horses were bridled, saddled, and ready. Madame was on her mare, and the Tourangeau at her side, galloping at full speed to her castle of Amboise, followed by the men-at-arms. To be brief and come to the facts without further commentary, De Beaune was lodged not twenty yards from madame, far from prying eyes. The courtiers and the household, much astonished, ran about inquiring from what quarter the danger might be expected ; but our hero, taken at his word, knew well enough where to find it. The virtue of the Regent, well known in the kingdom, saved her from suspicion, since she was supposed to be as impregnable as the castle of Péronne. At curfew, when everything was shut, both ears and eyes and the castle silent, Madame de Beaujeu sent away her handmaid, and called for her squire. The squire came. Then the lady and the adventurer sat side by side upon a velvet couch, in the shadow of a lofty fireplace, and the curious Regent, with a tender voice, asked of Jacques :

“ Are you not bruised ? It was very wrong of me to make a knight, wounded by one of my servants, ride twelve miles. I was so anxious about it that I would not go to bed without having seen you. Do you suffer ? ”

"I suffer with impatience," said he of the dozen, thinking it would not do to appear reluctant. "I see well," continued he, "my noble and beautiful mistress, that your servant has found favor in your sight."

"There, there," replied she; "did you not tell a story when you said——"

"What?" said he.

"Why, that you had followed me dozens of times to churches and other places to which I went."

"Certainly," said he.

"I am astonished," replid the Regent, "never to have seen until to-day a noble youth whose courage is apparent in his countenance. I am not ashamed of that which you heard me say when I believed you dead. You are agreeable to me, you please me, and you wish to do well."

Then the hour of the dreaded sacrifice having struck, Jacques fell at the knees of the Regent, kissed her feet, her hands, and everything, it is said; and while kissing her, previous to retirement, proved by many arguments to the aged virtue of his sovereign that a lady bearing the burden of the State had a perfect right to enjoy herself—a theory which was not directly admitted by the Regent, who determined to be forced, in order to throw the burden of the sin upon her lover. This notwithstanding, you may be sure she had highly perfumed and elegantly attired herself for the night, and shone with longing for embraces, for desire lent her a high color which greatly improved her complexion; and in spite of her feeble resistance she was, like a young girl, carried by assault in her royal couch, where the good lady and her young dozener conscientiously embraced each other. Then from play to quarrel, from quarrel to riot, from riot to ribaldry, from thread to needle, the Regent declared that she believed more in the virginity of the Holy Mary than in the promised dozen.

Now, by chance, Jacques de Beaune did not find this great

lady so very old between the sheets, since everything is metamorphosed by the light of the lamps of the night. Many women of fifty by day are twenty at midnight, as others are twenty at mid-day and a hundred after vespers. Jacques, happier at this sight than at that of the King on a hanging day, renewed his undertaking. Madame, herself astonished, promised every assistance on her part. The manor of Azay-le-Brûlé, with good title thereto, she undertook to confer upon her cavalier, as well as the pardon of his father, if from this encounter she came forth vanquished. Then the clever fellow said to himself:

“This is to save my father from punishment! this for the fief! this for the letting and selling! this for the forest of Azay! item for the right of fishing! another for the isles of Indre! this for the meadows! I may as well release from confiscation our land of La Carte, so dearly bought by my father! Once more for a place at Court!”

Arriving without hindrance at this point, he believed his dignity involved, and fancied that, having France under him, it was a question of the honor of the crown. In short, at the cost of a vow which he made to his patron, Monsieur St. Jacques, to build him a chapel at Azay, he presented his liege homage to the Regent in eleven clear, clean, limpid, and genuine periphrases. Concerning the epilogue of this slow conversation, the Tourangeau had the great self-confidence to wish excellently to regale the Regent, keeping for her on her waking the salute of an honest man, as it was necessary for the lord of Azay to thank his sovereign, which was wisely thought. But when nature is oppressed, she acts like a spirited horse, lies down, and will die under the whip sooner than move until it pleases her to rise reinvigorated. Thus, when in the morning the seignior of the castle of Azay desired to salute the daughter of King Louis XI., he was constrained, in spite of his courtesy, to make the salute as royal salutes should be made—with blank cartridge only. Therefore the Regent,

after getting up, and while she was breakfasting with Jacques, who called himself the legitimate lord of Azay, seized the occasion of this insufficiency to contradict her esquire, and pretended that, as he had not gained his wager, he had not earned the manor.

“*Ventre-Saint-Paterne?* I have been near enough,” said Jacques. “But, my dear lady and noble sovereign, it is not proper for either you or me to judge in this cause. The case being an allodial case, must be brought before your Council, since the fief of Azay is held from the crown.”

“*Pasques Dieu!*” replied the Regent, with a forced laugh. “I give you the place of the Sieur de Vieilleville in my house. Don’t trouble about your father. I will give you Azay, and will place you in a royal office, if you can, without injury to my honor, state the case in full council; but if one word falls to the damage of my reputation as a virtuous woman——”

“May I be hanged,” said Jacques, turning the thing into a joke, because there was a shade of anger in the face of Madame de Beaujeu.

In fact, the daughter of King Louis thought more of her royalty than of the roguish dozen, which she considered as nothing, since fancying she had had her night’s amusement without loosening her purse-strings, she preferred the difficult recital of his claim to another dozen offered her by the Tourangeau.

“Then, my lady,” replied her good companion, “I shall certainly be your squire.”

The captain, secretaries, and other persons holding office under the regency, astonished at the sudden departure of Madame de Beaujeu, learnt the cause of her anxiety and came in haste to the castle of Amboise to discover whence proceeded the rebellion, and were in readiness to hold a council when her majesty had arisen. She called them together, not to be suspected of having deceived them, and gave them certain falsehoods to consider, which they considered most wisely.

At the close of the sitting, came the new squire to accompany his mistress. Seeing the councilors rising, the bold Tourangeau begged them to decide a point of law which concerned both himself and the property of the crown.

“Listen to him,” said the Regent. “He speaks truly.”

Then Jacques de Beaune, without being nervous at the sight of this august court, spoke as follows, or thereabouts: “Noble lords, I beg you, although I am about to speak to you of walnut shells, to give your attention to this case, and pardon me the trifling nature of my language. One lord was walking with another in a fruit garden, and noticed a fine walnut tree, well planted, well grown, worth looking at, worth keeping, although a little empty; a nut tree always fresh, sweet-smelling, a tree which you would not leave if you once saw it, a tree of love which seemed the tree of good and evil, forbidden by the Lord, through which were banished our mother Eve and the gentleman her husband. Now, my lords, this said walnut tree was the subject of a slight dispute between the two, and of one of those many wagers which are occasionally made between friends. The younger boasted that he could throw twelve times through it a stick which he had in his hand at the time—as many people have who walk in a garden—and with each flight of the stick he would send a nut to the ground—

“That is, I believe, the knotty point of the case,” said Jacques, turning toward the Regent.

“Yes, gentlemen,” replied she, surprised at the craft of her squire.

“The other wagered to the contrary,” went on the pleader. “Now the first named throws his stick with such precision of aim, so gently and so well, that both derived pleasure therefrom, and by the joyous protection of the saints, who no doubt were amused spectators, with each throw there fell a nut; in fact, there fell twelve. But by chance the last of the fallen nuts was empty, and had no nourishing pulp from which

could have come another nut tree had the gardener planted it. Has the man with the stick gained his wager? I have finished. Judge."

"The thing is clear enough," said Messire Adam Fumée, a Tourangeau, who at that time was the keeper of the seals. "There is only one thing for the other to do."

"What is that?" said the Regent.

"To pay the wager, madame."

"He is rather too clever," said she, tapping her squire on the cheek. "He will be hanged one of these days."

She meant this as a joke. But these words were the real horoscope of the steward, who mounted the gallows by the ladder of royal favor, through the vengeance of another old woman, and the notorious treason of a man of Ballan, his secretary, whose fortune he had made, and whose name was Prévost, and not René Gentil, as certain persons have wrongly called him. This Ganelon and bad servant gave, it is said, to Madame d'Angoulême the receipt for the money which had been given him by Jacques de Beaune, then become baron of Samblançay, lord of La Carte and Azay, and one of the foremost men of the state. Of his two sons, one was Archbishop of Tours, the other minister of finance and Governor of Touraine. But this is not the subject of the present history.

Now that which concerns the present narrative is that Madame de Beaujeu, to whom the pleasure of love had come rather late in the day, well pleased with the great wisdom and knowledge of public affairs which her chance lover possessed, made him lord of the privy purse, in which office he behaved so well, and added so much to the contents of it, that his great renown procured for him one day the handling of the revenues, which he superintended and controlled most admirably, and with great profit to himself, which was but fair. The good Regent paid the bet, and handed over to her squire the manor of Azay-le-Brûlé, of which the castle had long before been demolished by the first bombarders who came into

Touraine, as every one knows. For this powdery miracle, but for the intervention of the King, the said engineers would have been condemned as heretics and abettors of Satan, by the ecclesiastical tribune of the chapter.

At this time there was being built with great care by Messire Bohier, minister of finance, the castle of Chenonceaux, which, as a curiosity and novel design, was placed right across the river Cher.

Now the Baron de Samblançay, wishing to oppose the said Bohier, determined to lay this foundation of his at the bottom of the Indre, where it still stands, the gem of this fair green valley, so solidly was it placed upon the piles. It cost Jacques de Beaune thirty thousand crowns, not counting the work done by his vassals.

You may take it for granted this castle is one of the finest, prettiest, most exquisite, and most elaborate castles of our sweet Touraine, and laves itself in the Indre like a princely creature, gaily decked with pavilions and lace-curtained windows, with fine weather-beaten soldiers on her vanes, turning whichever way the wind blows, as all soldiers do. But Samblançay was hanged before it was finished, and since that time no one has been found with sufficient money to complete it. Nevertheless, his master, King Francis I., was once his guest, and the royal chamber is still shown there. When the King was going to bed, Samblançay, whom the King called "old fellow," in honor of his white hairs, hearing his royal master, to whom he was devotedly attached, remark :

"Your clock has just struck twelve, old fellow!" replied, "Ah, Sire, to twelve strokes of a hammer, an old one now, but years ago a good one, at this hour of the clock do I owe my lands, the money spent on this place, and the honor of being in your service."

The King wished to know what his minister meant by these strange words; and when his majesty was getting into bed, Jacques de Beaune narrated to him the history with which you

are acquainted. Now Francis I., who was partial to these spicy stories, thought the adventure a very droll one, and was the more amused thereat because at that time his mother, the Duchesse l'Angoulême, in the decline of life, was pursuing the constable of Bourbon, in order to obtain of him one of these dozens.

Wicked love of a wicked woman, for therefrom proceeded the peril of the kingdom, the capture of the King, and the death—as has been before mentioned—of poor Samblançay.

I have here endeavored to relate how the castle of Azay came to be built, because it is certain that thus was commenced the great fortune of that Samblançay who did so much for his natal town, which he adorned; and also spent such immense sums upon the completion of the towers of the cathedral. This lucky adventure has been handed down from father to son, from lord to lord, in the said place of Azay-le-Ridel, where the story frisks still under the curtains of the King, which had been curiously respected down to the present day. It is, therefore, the falsest of falsities which attributes the dozen of the Tourangeau to a German knight, who by this deed would have secured the domains of Austria to the House of Hapsburgh.

The author of our days, who brought this history to light, although a learned man, has allowed himself to be deceived by certain chroniclers, since the archives of the Roman Empire make no mention of an acquisition of this kind. I am angry with him for having believed that a “braguette,” nourished with beer, could have been equal to the alchemical operations of the Chinonian “braguettes,”\* so much esteemed by Rabelais. And I have for the advantage of the country, the glory of Azay, the conscience of the castle, and

\* *Braguettes*, haut-de-chausses, culottes, et plus particulièrement la partie de devant de ce vêtement, le pont.—TRANSLATOR.

the renown of the House of Beaune, from which sprang the Sauves and the Noirmoutiers, reëstablished the facts in all their veritable, historical, and admirable beauty.

Should any ladies pay a visit to the castle, there are still *dozens* to be found in the neighborhood, but they can only be procured retail.



## THE FAIR IMPERIA MARRIED.

### I.

HOW MADAME IMPERIA WAS CAUGHT IN THE  
VERY NET SHE WAS ACCUSTOMED TO SPREAD  
FOR HER LOVE-BIRDS.

THE lovely lady, Imperia, who gloriously opens these tales, because she was the glory of her time, was compelled to come into the town of Rome, after the holding of the council, for the Cardinal of Ragusa loved her more than his cardinal's hat, and wished to have her near him. This rascal was so magnificent that he presented her with the beautiful palace that she had in the papal capital. About this time she had the misfortune to find herself in an interesting condition by this cardinal. As every one knows, this pregnancy finished with a fine little daughter, concerning whom the pope said jokingly that she should be named Theodora, as if to say "The Gift of God." The girl was thus named, and was exquisitely lovely.

The cardinal left his inheritance to this Theodora, whom the fair Imperia established in her hotel, for she was flying from Rome as from a pernicious place, where children were begotten, and where she had nearly spoilt her beautiful figure, her celebrated perfections, lines of the body, curves of the back, delicious breasts, and serpentine charms, which placed her as much above the other women of Christendom as the holy father was above all other Christians. But all her lovers knew that with the assistance of eleven doctors of Padua, seven master surgeons of Pavia, and five surgeons come from all parts, who assisted at her confinement, she was preserved from all injury. Some go so far as to say that she gained

therein superfineness and whiteness of skin. A famous man, of the school of Salerno, wrote a book on the subject, to show the value of a confinement for the freshness, health, preservation, and beauty of women. In this very learned book it was clearly proven to readers that that which was beautiful to see in Imperia, was that which it was permissible for lovers alone to behold; a rare case then, for she did not disarrange her attire for the pretty German princes whom she called her margraves, burgraves, electors, and dukes, just as a captain ranks his soldiers.

Every one knows that when she was eighteen years of age, the lovely Theodora, to atone for her mother's gay life, wished to retire into the bosom of the church. With this idea she placed herself in the hands of a cardinal, in order that he might instruct her in the duties of the devout. This wicked shepherd found the lamb so magnificently beautiful that he attempted to debauch her. Theodora instantly stabbed herself with a stiletto, in order not to be contaminated by the evil-minded priest. This adventure, which was consigned to the history of the period, made a great commotion in Rome, and was deplored by every one, so much was the daughter of Imperia beloved.

Then this noble courtesan, much afflicted, returned to Rome, there to weep for her poor daughter. She set out in the thirty-ninth year of her age, which was, according to some authors, the summer of her magnificent beauty, because then she had attained the acme of her perfection, like ripe fruit. Sorrow made her haughty and hard with those who spoke to her of love, in order to dry her tears. The pope himself visited her in her palace, and gave her certain words of admonition. But she refused to be comforted, saying that she would henceforward devote herself to God, because she had never yet been satisfied by any man, although she had ardently desired it; and all of them, even a little priest, whom she had adored like a saint's shrine, had deceived her. God,

she was sure, would not do so. This resolution disconcerted many, for she was the joy of a vast number of lords. So that people ran about the streets of Rome crying out :

“ Where is Madame Imperia ? Is she going to deprive the world of love ! ”

Some of the ambassadors wrote to their masters on the subject. The Emperor of the Romans was much cut up about it, because he loved her to distraction for eleven weeks ; had left her only to go to the wars, and loved her still as much as his most precious member, which, according to his own statement, was his eye, for that alone embraced the whole of his dear Imperia. In this extremity the pope sent for a Spanish physician, and conducted him to the beautiful creature, to whom he proved, by various arguments, adorned with Latin and Greek quotations, that beauty is impaired by tears and tribulations, and that through sorrow’s door wrinkles step in. This proposition, confirmed by the doctors of the holy college in controversy, had the effect of opening the doors of the palace that same evening. The young cardinals, the foreign envoys, the wealthy inhabitants, and the principal men of the town of Rome came, crowded the rooms, and held a joyous festival ; the common people made a grand illumination, and thus the whole population celebrated the return of the Queen of Pleasure to her occupation, for she was at that time the presiding deity of Love.

The experts in all the arts loved her much, because she spent considerable sums of money in improving the church in Rome which contained poor Theodora’s tomb, the which was destroyed during that pillage of Rome in which perished the traitorous constable of Bourbon, for this holy maiden was placed therein in a massive coffin of gold and silver, which the cursed soldiers were anxious to obtain. This basilica cost, it is said, more than the pyramid erected by the Lady Rhodepa, an Egyptian courtesan, eighteen hundred years before the coming of our divine Saviour, which proves the

antiquity of this pleasant occupation, the extravagant prices which the wise Egyptians paid for their pleasures, and how things deteriorate, seeing that now for a trifle you can have a chemise full of female loveliness in the Rue du Petit-Heulen, at Paris. Is it not an abomination?

Never had Madame Imperia appeared so lovely as at this first gala after her mourning. All the princes, cardinals, and others declared that she was worthy the homage of the whole world, which was there represented by a noble from every known land, and thus was it amply demonstrated that beauty was in every place queen of everything. The envoy of the King of France, who was a cadet of the house of l'Ile Adam, arrived late, although he had never yet seen Imperia, and was most anxious so to do. He was a handsome young knight, much in favor with his sovereign, in whose Court he had a mistress, whom he loved with infinite tenderness, and who was the daughter of Monsieur de Montmorency, a lord whose domains bordered upon those of the house of l'Ile Adam. To this penniless cadet the King had given certain missions to the duchy of Milan, of which he had acquitted himself so well that he was sent to Rome to advance the negotiations concerning which historians have written so much in their books. Now if he had nothing of his own, poor little l'Ile Adam relied upon so good a beginning. He was slightly built, but upright as a column, dark, with black, glistening eyes, and a man not easily taken in; but concealing his finesse, he had the air of an innocent child, which made him gentle and amiable as a laughing maiden.

Directly this gentleman joined her circle, and her eyes had rested upon him, Madame Imperia felt herself bitten by a strong desire, which stretched the harp-strings of her nature, and produced therefrom a sound she had not heard for many a day. She was seized with such a vertigo of true love at the sight of this freshness of youth, that, but for her imperial dignity, she would have kissed the good cheeks which shone like

little apples. Now take note of this: that so-called modest women, and ladies whose skirts bear their armorial bearings, are thoroughly ignorant of the nature of a man, because they keep to one alone, like that Queen of France who believed all men had ulcers in the nose because the King had ; but a great courtesan, like Madame Imperia, knew man to his core, because she had handled a great many. In her retreat every one came out in his true colors, and concealed nothing, thinking to himself that he would not be long with her. Having often deplored this subjection, sometimes she would remark that she suffered from pleasure more than she suffered from pain. There was the dark shadow of her life. You may be sure that a lover was often compelled to part with a nice little heap of crowns in order to pass the night with her, and was reduced to desperation by a refusal. Now for her it was a joyful thing to feel a youthful desire, like that she had for the little priest, whose story commences this collection ; but because she was older than in those merry days, love was more firmly established in her, and she soon perceived that it was of a fiery nature when it began to make itself felt ; indeed, she suffered in her skin like a cat that is being scorched, and so much so that she had an intense longing to spring on to this gentleman, and bear him in triumph to her nest, as a kite does its prey, but with great difficulty she restrained herself.

When he came and bowed to her, she threw back her head, and assumed a most dignified attitude, as do those who have a love infatuation in their hearts. The gravity of her demeanor to the young ambassador caused many to think that she had work in store for him ; equivocating on the word, after the custom of the time. L'Ile Adam, knowing himself to be dearly loved by his mistress, troubled himself but little about Madame Imperia, grave or gay, and frisked about like a goat let loose. The courtesan, terribly annoyed at this, changed her tone ; from being sulky she became gay and lively, came to him, softened her voice, sharpened her glance,

gracefully inclined her head, rubbed against him with her sleeve, and called him monseigneur, embraced him with loving words, trifled with his hand, and finished by smiling at him most affably. He, not imagining that so unprofitable a lover would suit her, for he was as poor as a church mouse, and did not know that his beauty was equal in her eyes to all the treasures of the world, was not taken in her trap, but continued to ride the high horse with his hands on his hips.

This disdain of her passion irritated madame to the heart, which by this spark was set in flame. If you doubt this, it is because you know nothing of the profession of Madame Imperia, who by reason of it might be compared to a chimney, in which a great number of fires had been lighted, which had filled it with soot; in this state a match was sufficient to burn everything there, where a hundred fagots had smoked comfortably. She burned within herself from top to toe in a horrible manner, and could not be extinguished save with the water of love. The cadet of l'Ile Adam left the room without noticing this ardor. Madame, disconsolate at his departure, lost her senses from her head to her feet, and so thoroughly that she sent a messenger to him in the galleries, begging him to pass the night with her.

On no other occasion of her life had she had this cowardice, either for king, pope, or emperor, since the high price of her favors came from the bondage in which she held her admirers, whom the more she humbled the more she raised herself. The disdainful hero of this history was informed by the head chamberwoman, who was a clever jade, that in all probability a great treat awaited him, for most certainly madame would regale him with her most delicate inventions of love. L'Ile Adam returned to the salons, delighted at this lucky chance. Directly the envoy of France reappeared, as every one had seen Imperia turn pale at his departure, the general joy knew no bounds, because every one was delighted to see her return to her old life of love. An English cardinal, who had drained

more than one big-bellied flagon, and wished to taste Imperia, went to l'Ile Adam and whispered to him:

“ Hold her fast, so that she shall never again be able to escape us.”

The story of this night was told to the pope at his levée, and caused him to remark, *Lætamini, gentes, quoniam surrexit Dominus.* A quotation which the old cardinals abominated as a profanation of sacred texts. Seeing which, the pope reprimanded them severely, and took occasion to lecture them, telling them that if they were good Christians they were bad politicians. Indeed, he relied upon the fair Imperia to reclaim the emperor, and with this idea syringed her well with flattery.

The lights of the palace being extinguished, the golden flagons on the floor, and the servants drunk and stretched about on the carpets, madame entered her bed-chamber, leading by the hand her dear lover-elect; and she was well pleased, and has since confessed that so strongly was she bitten with love she could hardly restrain herself from rolling at his feet like a beast of the field, begging him to crush her beneath him if he could. L'Ile Adam slipped off his garments, and tumbled into bed as if he were in his own house. Seeing which, madame hastened her preparations, and sprang into her lover's arms with a frenzy that astonished her women, who knew her to be ordinarily one of the most modest of women on these occasions. This astonishment became general throughout the country, for the pair remained in bed for nine days, eating, drinking, and embracing in a marvelous and most masterly manner. Madame told her women that at last she had put her hand upon a phoenix of love, since he revived from every attack. Nothing was talked of in Rome and Italy but the victory that had been gained over Imperia, who had boasted that she would yield to no man, and spat upon all of them, even the dukes. As to the aforesaid margraves and burgraves, she gave them the tail of her dress to hold, and said that if

she did not tread them under foot, they would trample upon her.

Madame confessed to her servants that, differently to all the other men she had had to put up with, the more she fondled this child of love, the more she desired to do so, and that she would never be able to part with him ; nor his splendid eyes, which blinded her ; nor his branch of coral, that she always hungered after. She further declared that, if such were his desire, she would let him suck her blood and eat her breasts—which were the most lovely in the world—and cut her tresses, of which she had only given a single one to the Emperor of the Romans, who kept it in his breast, like a precious relic ; finally, she confessed that on that night only had life begun for her, because the embrace of Villiers de l'Ile Adam sent the blood to her in three bounds and in a brace of shakes. These expressions, becoming known, made every one very miserable.

Directly she went out, Imperia told the ladies of Rome that she should die if she were deserted by this gentleman, and would cause herself, like Queen Cleopatra, to be bitten by an asp. She declared openly that she had bidden an eternal adieu to her former gay life, and would show the whole world what virtue was by abandoning her empire for this Villiers de l'Ile Adam, whose servant she would rather be than reign over Christendom. The English cardinal remonstrated with the pope that this love for one, in the heart of a woman who was the joy of all, was an infamous depravity, and that he ought, with a brief *in partibus*, to annul this marriage, which robbed the fashionable world of its principal attraction. But the love of this poor woman, who had confessed the miseries of her life, was so sweet a thing, and so moved the most dissipated heart, that she silenced all clamor, and every one forgave her her happiness.

One day during Lent, Imperia made her people fast, and ordered them to go and confess, and return to God. She herself went and fell at the pope's feet, and there showed such

penitence that she obtained from him remission of all her sins, believing that the absolution of the pope would communicate to her soul that virginity which she was grieved at being unable to offer to her lover. It is impossible to help thinking that there was some virtue in the ecclesiastical *piscina*, for the poor cadet was so smothered with love that he fancied himself in Paradise, and left the negotiations of the King of France, left his love for Mademoiselle de Montmorency—in fact, left everything to marry Madame Imperia, in order that he might live and die with her. Such was the effect of the learned ways of this great lady of pleasure directly she turned her science to the profit of a virtuous love. Imperia bade adieu to her admirers at a royal feast, given in honor of her wedding, which was a wonderful ceremony, at which all the Italians princes were present. She had, it is said, a million gold crowns; in spite of the vastness of this sum, every one, far from blaming l'Ile Adam, paid him many compliments, because it was evident that neither Madame Imperia nor her young husband thought of any thing but one. The pope blessed their marriage, and said that it was a fine thing to see the foolish virgin returning to God by the road of marriage.

But during that last night in which it would be permissible for all to behold the Queen of Beauty, who was about to become a simple chatelaine of the kingdom of France, there were a great number of men who mourned for the merry nights, the suppers, the masked balls, the joyous games, and the melting hours, when each one emptied his heart to her. Every one regretted the ease and freedom which had always been found in the residence of this lovely creature, who now appeared more tempting than she had ever done in her life, for the fervid heat of her great love made her glisten like a summer sun.

Much did they lament the fact that she had had the sad phantasy to become a respectable woman. To these Madame

de l'Ile Adam answered jestingly that, after twenty-four years passed in the service of the public, she had a right to retire. Others said to her that, however distant the sun was, people could warm themselves in it, while she would show herself no more. To these she replied that she would still have smiles to bestow upon those lords who would come and see how she played the rôle of a virtuous woman.

To this the English envoy answered he believed her capable of pushing virtue to its extreme point. She gave a present to each of her friends, and large sums to the poor and suffering of Rome; beside this, she left to the convent where her daughter was to have been, and to the church she had built, the wealth she had inherited from Theodora, which came from the Cardinal of Ragusa.

When the two spouses set out they were accompanied a long way by knights in mourning, and even by the common people, who wished them every happiness, because Madame Imperia had been hard on the rich only, and had always been kind and gentle to the poor. This lovely queen of love was hailed with acclamations throughout the journey in all the towns of Italy where the report of her conversion had spread, and where every one was curious to see pass a case so rare as two such spouses.

Several princes received this handsome couple at their Courts, saying that it was but right to show honor to this woman who had the courage to renounce her empire over the world of fashion, to become a virtuous woman. But there was an evil-minded fellow, one my lord Duke of Ferrara, who said to l'Ile Adam that his great fortune had not cost him much. At this first offense Madame Imperia showed what a good heart she had, for she gave up all the money she had received from her lovers to ornament the dome of St. Maria del Fiore, in the town of Florence, which turned the laugh against the Sire d'Este, who boasted that he had built a church in spite of the empty condition of his purse. You

may be sure he was reprimanded for this joke by his brother the cardinal. The fair Imperia only kept her own wealth and that which the Emperor had bestowed upon her out of pure friendship since his departure, the amount of which was, however, considerable. The cadet of l'Ile Adam had a duel with the duke, in which he wounded him.

Thus neither Madame de l'Ile Adam nor her husband could be in any way reproached. This piece of chivalry caused her to be gloriously received in all places she passed through, especially in Piedmont, where the fêtes were splendid. Verses, which the poet then composed, such as sonnets, epithalamias, and odes, have been given in certain collections; but all poetry was weak in comparison with her, who was, according to an expression of Monsieur Boccaccio, poetry itself.

The prize in this tourney of fêtes and gallantry must be awarded to the good Emperor of the Romans, who, knowing of the misbehavior of the Duke of Ferrara, dispatched an envoy to his old flame, charged with Latin manuscripts, in which he told her that he loved her so much for herself that he was delighted to know she was happy, but grieved that all her happiness was not derived from him; that he had lost the right to make her presents, but that, if the King of France received her coldly, he would think it an honor to acquire a Villiers to the holy empire, and would give him such principalities as he might choose from his domains. The fair Imperia replied that she was extremely obliged to the Emperor, but that had she to suffer contumely upon contumely in France, she still intended there to finish her days.

## II.

### HOW THIS MARRIAGE ENDED.

Not knowing if she would be received or not, the lady of l'Ile Adam would not go to Court, but lived in the country, where her husband made a fine establishment, purchasing the manor of Beaumont-le-Vicomte, which gave rise to the equivoque upon this name, made by our well-beloved Rabelais, in his most magnificent book. He acquired also the domain of Nointel, the forest of Carenelle, St. Martin, and other places in the neighborhood of l'Ile Adam, where his brother Villiers resided. These said acquisitions made him the most powerful lord in the Isle de France and county of Paris. He built a wonderful castle near Beaumont, which was afterward ruined by the English, and adorned it with the furniture, foreign tapestries, chests, pictures, statues, and curiosities of his wife, who was a great connoisseur, which made this place equal to the most magnificent castles known. The happy pair led a life so envied by all that nothing was talked about in Paris and at Court but this marriage, the good fortune of the Sieur de Beaumont, and, above all, of the perfect, loyal, gracious, and religious life of his wife, who from habit many still called Madame Imperia; who was no longer proud and sharp as steel, but had the virtues and qualities of a respectable woman, and was an example in many things to a queen. She was much beloved by the church on account of her great religion, for she had never once forgotten God, having, as she once said, spent much of her time with churchmen, abbots, bishops, and cardinals, who had sprinkled her well with holy water, and under the curtains worked her eternal salvation.

The praises sung in honor of this lady had such an effect that the King came to Beauvoisis to gaze upon this wonder,

and did the knight the honor to sleep at Beaumont, remained there three days, and had a royal hunt there with the Queen and the whole Court. You may be sure that he was surprised, as were also the Queen, the ladies, and the Court, at the manners of this superb creature, who was proclaimed Lady of Courtesy and Beauty. The King first, then the Queen, and afterward every individual member of the company, complimented l'Ile Adam on having chosen such a wife. The modesty of the chatelaine did more than pride would have accomplished; for she was invited to Court and everywhere, so imperious was her great heart, so tyrannic her violent love for her husband. You may be sure that her charms, hidden under the garments of virtue, were none the less exquisite. The King gave the vacant post of lieutenant of the Ile de France and provost of Paris to his former ambassador, giving him the title of Viscount of Beaumont, which established him as governor of the whole province, and put him on an excellent footing at Court. But this was the cause of a great wound in madame's heart, because a wretch, jealous of this unclouded happiness, asked her, playfully, if Beaumont had ever spoken to her of his first love, Mademoiselle de Montmorency, who at that time was twenty-two years of age, as she was sixteen at the time the marriage took place in Rome—the which young lady loved l'Ile Adam so much that she remained a maiden, would listen to no proposals of marriage, and was dying of a broken heart, unable to banish her perfidious lover from her remembrance, and was desirous of entering the convent of Chelles.

Madame Imperia, during the six years of her marriage, had never heard this name, and was sure from this fact that she was indeed beloved. You can imagine that this time had been passed as a single day, that both believed they had only been married the evening before, and that each night was as a wedding-night, and, if business took the knight out of doors, he was quite melancholy, being unwilling ever to have her out

of his sight, and she was the same with him. The King, who was very partial to the viscount, also made a remark to him which stung him to the quick, when he said :

“ You have no children ? ”

To which Beaumont replied, with the face of a man whose raw place you have touched with your finger :

“ Monseigneur, my brother has ; thus our line is safe.”

Now it happened that his brother’s two children died suddenly—one from a fall from his horse at a tournament and the other from illness. Monsieur l’Ile Adam the elder was so stricken with grief at these two deaths that he expired soon after so much did he love his two sons. By this means the manor of Beaumont, the property at Carenelle, St. Martin, Nointel, and the surrounding domains were reunited to the manor of l’Ile Adam and the neighboring forests, and the cadet became the head of the house. At this time madame was forty-five, and was still fit to bear children ; but, alas ! she conceived not. As soon as she saw the lineage of l’Ile Adam destroyed, she was anxious to obtain offspring.

Now, as during the seven years which had elapsed she had never once had the slightest symptom of pregnancy, she believed, according to the statement of a clever physician whom she sent for from Paris, that this barrenness proceeded from the fact that both she and her husband, always more lovers than spouses, allowed pleasure to interfere with business, and by this means engendering was prevented. Then she endeavored to restrain her impetuosity, and to take things coolly, because the physician had explained to her that in a state of nature animals never failed to breed, because the females employed none of those artifices, tricks, and hanky-pankies with which women accommodate the olives of Poissy, and for this reason they thoroughly deserved the title of *beasts*. She promised him no longer to play with such a serious affair, and to forget all the ingenious devices in which she had been so fertile.

But, alas! although she kept as quiet as that German woman who lay so still that her husband embraced her to death, and then went, poor baron, to obtain absolution from the pope, who delivered his celebrated brief, in which he requested the ladies of Franconia to be a little more lively, and prevent a repetition of such a crime. Madame de l'Ile Adam did not conceive, and fell into a state of great melancholy. Then she began to notice how thoughtful had become her husband, l'Ile Adam, whom she watched when he thought she was not looking, and who wept that he had no fruit of his great love. Soon this pair mingled their tears, for everything was common to the two in this fine household, and, as they never left each other, the thought of the one was necessarily the thought of the other. When madame beheld a poor person's child she nearly died of grief, and it took her a whole day to recover. Seeing this great sorrow, l'Ile Adam ordered all children to be kept out of his wife's sight, and said soothing things to her, such as that children often turned out badly; to which she replied, that a child made by those who loved so passionately would be the finest child in the world. He told her that their sons might perish, like those of his poor brother; to which she replied, that she would not let them stir further from her petticoats than a hen allows her chickens. In fact, she had an answer for everything.

Madame caused a woman to be sent for who dealt in magic, and who was supposed to be learned in these mysteries, who told her that she had often seen women unable to conceive in spite of every effort, but yet they had succeeded by studying the manners and customs of animals. Madame took the beasts of the field for her preceptors, but she did not increase her size; her flesh still remained firm and white as marble. She returned to the physical science of the master doctors of Paris, and sent for a celebrated Arabian physician, who had just arrived in France with a new science. Then this *savant*,

brought up in the school of one Sieur Averroes, entered into certain medical details, and declared that the loose life she had formerly led had for ever ruined her chance of obtaining offspring.

The physical reasons which he assigned were so contrary to the teaching of the holy books which establish the majesty of man, made in the image of his Creator, and were so contrary to the system upheld by sound sense and good doctrine, that the doctors of Paris laughed them to scorn. The Arabian physician left the school where his master, the Sieur Averroes, was unknown. The doctors told madame, who had come to Paris, that she was to keep on as usual, since she had had during her gay life the lovely Theodora, by the cardinal of Ragusa, and that the right of having children remained with women as long as their blood circulated, and that all she had to do was to multiply the chances of conception. This advice appeared to her so good that she multiplied her victories, but it was only multiplying her defeats, since she obtained the flowers of love without its fruits. The poor afflicted woman wrote then to the pope, who loved her much, and told him of her sorrows. The good pope replied to her with a gracious homily, written with his own hand, in which he told her that when human science and things terrestrial failed, we should turn to heaven and implore the grace of God.

Then she determined to go with naked feet, accompanied by her husband, to Notre Dame de Liesse, celebrated for her intervention in similar cases, and made a vow to build a magnificent cathedral in gratitude for the child. But she bruised and injured her pretty feet, and conceived nothing but a violent grief, which was so great that some of her lovely tresses fell off and some turned white. At last the faculty of making children was taken from her, which brought on the vapors consequent upon hypochondria, and caused her skin to turn yellow. She was then forty-nine years of age, and lived in her castle of l'Ile Adam, where she grew as thin as a leper in

a lazarus-house. The poor creature was all the more wretched because l'Ile Adam was still amorous, and as good as gold to her, who failed in her duty because she had formerly been too free with the men, and was now, according to her own disdainful remark, only a caldron to cook chitterlings!

“Ha!” said she one evening when these thoughts were tormenting her. “In spite of the church, in spite of the King, in spite of everything, Madame de l'Ile Adam is still the wicked Imperia!”

She fell into a violent passion when she saw this handsome gentleman have everything man can desire, great wealth, royal favor, unequaled love, matchless wife, pleasure such as none other could procure, and yet fail in that which is dearest to the head of a house—namely, lineage. With this idea in her head, she wished to die, thinking how good and noble he had been to her, and how much she failed in her duty in not giving him children, and in being henceforward unable to do so. She had her sorrow in the secret recesses of her heart, and conceived a devotion worthy of her great love. To put into practice this heroic design she became still more amorous, took extreme care of her charms, and made use of learned precepts to maintain her bodily perceptions, which threw out an incredible lustre.

About this time the Sieur de Montmorency conquered the repulsion his daughter entertained for marriage, and her alliance with one Sieur de Chatillon was much talked about. Madame Imperia, who lived only three leagues distant from Montmorency, one day sent her husband out hunting in the forest, and set out toward the castle where the young lady lived. Arrived in the grounds she walked about there, telling a servant to inform his mistress that a lady had a most important communication to make to her, and that she had come to request an audience. Much interested by the account which she received of the beauty, courtesy, and manners of the unknown lady, Mademoiselle de Montmorency went in

great haste into the gardens, and there met her rival, whom she did not know.

“ My dear,” said the poor woman, weeping to find the young maiden as beautiful as herself, “ I know that they are trying to force you into a marriage with Monsieur de Châtillon, although you still love Monsieur de l’Ile Adam. Have confidence in the prophecy that I here make you, that he whom you have loved, and who only was false to you through a snare into which an angel might have fallen, will be free from the burden of his old wife before the leaves fall. Thus the constancy of your love will have its crown of flowers. Now, have the courage to refuse this marriage they are arranging for you, and you may yet clasp your first and only love. Pledge me your word to love and cherish l’Ile Adam, who is the kindest of men ; never to cause him a moment’s anguish, and tell him to reveal to you all the secrets of love invented by Madame Imperia, because, in practicing them, being young, you will be easily able to obliterate the remembrance of her from his mind.”

Mademoiselle de Montmorency was so astonished that she could make no answer, and let this queen of beauty depart, and believed her to be a fairy, until a workman told her that the fairy was Madame de l’Ile Adam. Although the adventure was inexplicable, she told her father that she would not give her consent to the proposed marriage until after the autumn, so much is it in the nature of Love to ally itself with Hope, in spite of the bitter pills which this deceitful and gracious companion gives her to swallow like bulls’ eyes.

During the months when the grapes are gathered, Imperia would not let l’Ile Adam leave her, and was so amorous that one would have imagined she wished to kill him, since l’Ile Adam felt as though he had a fresh bride in his arms every night. The next morning the good woman requested him to keep the remembrance of these joys in his heart. Then, to know what her lover’s real thoughts on the subject were, she

said to him: "Poor l'Ile Adam, we were very silly to marry—a lad like you, with your twenty-three years, and an old woman close on forty." He answered her, that his happiness was such that he was the envy of every one, that at her age her equal did not exist among the younger women, and that if ever she grew old he would love her wrinkles, believing that even in the tomb she would be lovely, and her skeleton lovable.

To these answers, which brought the tears into her eyes, she one morning answered maliciously that Mademoiselle Montmorency was very lovely and very faithful. This speech forced l'Ile Adam to tell her that she pained him by telling him of the only wrong he had ever committed in his life—the breaking of the troth pledged to his first sweetheart, all love for whom he had since effaced from his heart. This candid speech made her seize him and clasp him to her heart, affected at the loyalty of his discourse on a subject from which many would have shrunk.

"My dear love," said she, "for a long time past I have been suffering from a retraction of the heart, which has always since my youth been dangerous to my life, and in this opinion the Arabian physician coincides. If I die, I wish you to make the most binding oath a knight can make to wed Mademoiselle de Montmorency. I am so certain of dying that I leave my property to you only on condition that this marriage takes place."

Hearing this, l'Ile Adam turned pale, and felt faint at the mere thought of an eternal separation from his good wife.

"Yes, dear treasure of love," continued she. "I am punished by God there where my sins were committed, for the great joys that I feel dilate my heart, and have, according to the Arabian doctor, weakened the vessels which in a moment of excitement will burst; but I have always implored God to take my life at the age in which I now am, because I would not see my charms marred by the ravages of time."

This great and noble woman saw then how well she was beloved. This is how she obtained the greatest sacrifice of love that ever was made upon this earth. She alone knew what a charm existed in the embraces, fondlings, and raptures of the conjugal bed, which were such that poor l'Ille Adam would rather have died than allow himself to be deprived of the amorous delicacies she knew so well how to prepare. At this confession made by her that, in the excitement of love, her heart would burst, the chevalier cast himself at her knees, and declared that to preserve *her* life he would never ask her for love, but would live contented to see her only at his side, happy at being able to touch but the hem of her garment.

She replied, bursting into tears, "that she would rather die than lose one iota of his love; that she would die as she had lived, since luckily she could make a man embrace her when such was her desire without having to put her request into words."

Here it must be stated that the cardinal of Ragusa had given her as a present an article, which this holy joker called *in articulo mortis* (the point of death). It was a tiny glass bottle, no bigger than a bean, made at Venice, and containing a poison so subtle that by breaking it between the teeth death came instantly and painlessly. He had received it from the Signora Tophana, the celebrated maker of poisons of the town of Rome.

Now this tiny bottle was under the bezel of a ring, preserved from all objects that could break it by certain plates of gold. Poor Imperia put it into her mouth several times without being able to make up her mind to bite it, so much pleasure did she take in the moment she believed to be her last. Then she would pass before her in mental review all her methods of enjoyment before breaking the glass, and determined that when she felt the most perfect of all joys she would bite the bottle.

The poor creature departed this life on the night of the first

day of October. Then was there heard a great clamor in the forests and in the clouds, as if the loves had cried aloud: "The great Noc is dead!" in imitation of the pagan gods who, at the coming of the Saviour of men, fled into the skies, saying: "The great Pan is slain!" A cry which was heard by some persons navigating the Eubean Sea, and preserved by a father of the church.

Madame Imperia died without being spoiled in shape, so much had God made her the irreproachable model of a woman. She had, it was said, a magnificent tint upon her flesh, caused by the proximity of the flaming wings of Pleasure, who cried and groaned over her corpse. Her husband mourned for her most bitterly, never suspecting that she had died to deliver him from a childless wife, for the doctor who embalmed her said not a word concerning the cause of her death. This great sacrifice was discovered six years after the marriage of l'Ile Adam with Mademoiselle de Montmorency, because she told him all about the visit of Madame Imperia. The poor gentleman immediately fell into a state of great melancholy, and finished by dying, being unable to banish the remembrance of those joys of love which it was beyond the power of a novice to restore to him; thereby did he prove the truth of that which was said at the time, that this woman would never die in a heart where she had once reigned.

This teaches us that virtue is well understood but by those who have practiced vice; for among the most modest women few would thus have sacrificed life, in whatever high state of religion you look for them.

## IN WHICH IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT FORTUNE IS ALWAYS FEMININE.

DURING the time when knights courteously offered to each other both help and assistance in seeking their fortunes, it happened that in Sicily—which, as you are probably aware, is an island situated in the corner of the Mediterranean Sea, and formerly celebrated—one knight met in a wood another knight, who had the appearance of a Frenchman. Presumably, this Frenchman was by some chance stripped of everything, and was so wretchedly attired that but for his princely air he might have been taken for a blackguard. It was possible that his horse had died of hunger or fatigue, on disembarking from the foreign shore whence he came, on the faith of the good luck which happened to the French in Sicily, which was true in every respect.

The Sicilian knight, whose name was Pezare, was a Venetian long absent from the Venetian republic, and with no desire to return, since he had obtained a footing in the Court of the King of Sicily. Being short of funds in Venice, because he was a younger son, he had no fancy for commerce, and was for that reason eventually abandoned by his family, a most illustrious one. He therefore remained at this Court, where he was much liked by the King. This gentleman was riding a splendid Spanish horse, and thinking to himself how lonely he was in this strange Court, without trusty friends, and how in such cases fortune was harsh to helpless people and became a traitress, when he met the poor French knight, who appeared far worse off than he who had good weapons, a fine horse, and a mansion where servants were then preparing a sumptuous supper.

“ You must have come a long way to have so much dust on your feet,” said the Venetian.

“ My feet have not as much dust as the road was long,” answered the Frenchman.

“ If you have traveled so much,” continued the Venetian, “ you must be a learned man.”

“ I have learned,” replied the Frenchman, “ to give no heed to those who do not trouble about me. I have learned that however high a man’s head might be, his feet were always level with mine ; more than that, I have learned to have no confidence in the warm days of winter, in the sleep of my enemies, or the words of my friends.”

“ You are, then, richer than I am,” said the Venetian, astonished, “ since you tell me things of which I never thought.”

“ Every one must think for himself,” said the Frenchman ; “ and as you have interrogated me, I can request of you the kindness of pointing out to me the road to Palermo or some inn, for the night is closing.”

“ Are you, then, acquainted with no French or Sicilian gentleman at Palermo ? ”

“ No.”

“ Then you are not certain of being received ? ”

“ I am disposed to forgive those who reject me. The road, sir, if you please ? ”

“ I am lost like yourself,” said the Venetian. “ Let us look for it in company.”

“ To do that we must go together ; but you are on horseback, I am on foot.”

The Venetian took the French knight on his saddle behind him, and said :

“ Do you know with whom you are ? ”

“ With a man apparently.”

“ Do you think you are in safety ? ”

“ If you were a robber, you would have to take care of

yourself," said the Frenchman, putting the point of his dagger to the Venetian's heart.

"Well, now, my noble Frenchman, you appear to me a man of great learning and sound sense; know that I am a noble, established at the Court of Sicily, but alone, and I seek a friend. You seem to be in the same plight, and, judging from appearances, you do not seem friendly with your lot, and have, apparently, need of everybody."

"Should I be happier if everybody wanted me?"

"You are a devil, who turns every one of my words against me. By our blessed Saint-Mark! my lord knight, can one trust you?"

"More than yourself, who commenced our federal friendship by deceiving me, since you guide your horse like a man who knows his way, and you said you were lost."

"And did not you deceive me," said the Venetian, "by making a sage of your year's walk, and giving a noble knight the appearance of a vagabond? Here is my abode; my servants have prepared supper for us."

The Frenchman jumped off the horse, and entered the house with the Venetian cavalier, accepting his supper. They both seated themselves at the table. The Frenchman fought so well with his jaws, he twisted the morsels with so much agility, that he showed himself equally learned in suppers, and showed it again in dexterously draining the wine-flasks without his eye becoming dimmed or his understanding affected. Then you may be sure the Venetian thought to himself that he had fallen in with a fine son of Adam, sprung from the right side and not the wrong one.

While they were drinking together, the Venetian endeavored to find some joint through which to sound the secret depths of his friend's cogitations. He, however, clearly perceived that he would cast aside his shirt sooner than his prudence, and judged it opportune to gain his esteem by opening his doublet to him. Therefore he told him in what state was

Sicily, where reigned Prince Leufroid and his gentle wife; how gallant was the Court, what courtesy there flourished; that there abounded many lords of Spain, Italy, France, and other countries, lords in high feather and well feathered; many princesses, as rich as noble, and as noble as rich; that this prince had the loftiest aspirations—such as to conquer Morocco, Constantinople, Jerusalem, the lands of Soudan, and other African places. Certain men of vast minds conducted his affairs, bringing together the ban and *arrière-ban* (summoned people) of the flower of Christian chivalry, and kept up this splendor with the idea of causing to reign over the Mediterranean this Sicily, so opulent in times gone by, and of ruining Venice, which had not a foot of land. These designs had been planted in the King's mind by him, Pezare; but although he was high in that prince's favor, he felt himself weak, had no assistance from the courtiers, and desired to make a friend. In this great trouble he had gone for a little ride to turn matters over in his mind, and decide upon the course to pursue. Now, since while in this idea he had met a man of so much sense as the chevalier had proved himself to be, he proposed to fraternize with him, to open his purse to him, and give him his palace to live in. They would journey in company through life in search of honors and pleasure, without concealing one single thought, and would assist each other on all occasions as the brothers-in-arms did in the Crusades. Now, as the Frenchman was seeking his fortune and required assistance, the Venetian did not for a moment expect that this offer of mutual consolation would be refused.

“Although I stand in need of no assistance,” said the Frenchman, “because I rely upon a point which will procure me all that I desire, I should like to acknowledge your courtesy, dear Chevalier Pezare. You will soon see that you will yet be the debtor of Gauttier de Montsoreau, a gentleman of the fair land of Touraine.”

“Do you possess any relic with which your fortune is wound up?” said the Venetian.

“A talisman given me by my dear mother,” said the Tourangeau, “with which castles and cities are built and demolished, a hammer to coin money, a remedy for every ill, a traveler’s staff always ready to be tried, and worth most when in a state of readiness, a master-tool, which executes wondrous works in all sorts of forges, without making the slightest noise.”

“Eh! by St. Mark! you have, then, a mystery concealed in your hauberk?”

“No,” said the French knight; “it is a perfectly natural thing. Here it is.”

And rising suddenly from the table to prepare for bed, Gauttier showed the Venetian the finest talisman to procure joy that he had ever seen.

“This,” said the Frenchman, as they both got into bed together, according to the custom of the times, “overcomes every obstacle, by making itself master of female hearts; and as the ladies are queens in this Court, your friend Gauttier will soon reign there.”

The Venetian remained in great astonishment at the sight of the secret charms of the said Gauttier, who had indeed been bounteously endowed by his mother, and perhaps also by his father, and would thus triumph over everything, since he joined to this corporeal perfection the wit of a young page and the wisdom of an old devil. Then they swore an eternal friendship, regarding as nothing therein a woman’s heart, vowing to have one and the same idea, as if their heads had been in the same helmet; and they fell asleep on the same pillow enchanted with this fraternity. This was a common occurrence in those days.

On the morrow the Venetian gave a fine horse to his friend Gauttier, also a purse full of money, fine silken hose, a velvet doublet fringed with gold, and an embroidered mantle, which

garments set off his figure so well, and so showed up his beauties, that the Venetian was certain he would captivate all the ladies. The servants received orders to obey this Gauttier as they would himself, so that they fancied their master had been fishing, and had caught this Frenchman.

Then the two friends made their entry into Palermo at the hour when the princes and princesses were taking the air. Pezare presented his French friend, speaking so highly of his merits, and obtaining such a gracious reception for him, that Leufroid kept him to supper. The knight kept a sharp eye on the Court, and noticed therein various curious little secret practices. If the King was a brave and handsome prince, the princess was a Spanish lady of high temperature, the most beautiful and most noble woman of his Court, but inclined to melancholy. Looking at her, the Tourangeau believed that she was sparingly embraced by the King, for the sense of Touraine hath it that joy in the face comes from joy elsewhere. Pezare pointed out to his friend Gauttier several ladies to whom Leufroid was exceedingly gracious, and who were tremendously jealous, and fought for him in a tournament of gallantries and wonderful female inventions. From all this Gauttier concluded that the prince went considerably astray with his Court, although he had the prettiest wife in the world, and occupied himself by taxing the ladies of Sicily, in order that he might put his horse in their stables, vary his fodder, and learn the equestrian capabilities of many lands.

Perceiving what a life Leufroid was leading, the Sieur de Montsoreau, certain that no one in the Court had had the heart to enlighten the Queen, determined at one blow to plant his halberd in the field of the fair Spaniard by a master-stroke; and this is how: At supper-time, in order to show courtesy to the foreign knight, the King took care to place him near the Queen, to whom the gallant Gauttier offered his arm to take her into the room, and conducted her there hastily, to get ahead of those who were following, in order to

whisper, first of all, a word concerning a subject which always pleases the ladies in whatever condition they may be. Imagine what this word was, and how it went straight through the stubble and weeds into the warm thicket of love.

“I know, your majesty, what causes your paleness of face.”

“What?” said she.

“You are so loving that the King loves you night and day; thus you abuse your advantage, for he will die of love.”

“What should I do to keep him alive?” said the Queen.

“Forbid him to repeat at your altar more than three prayers a day.”

“You are joking after the French fashion, Sir Knight, seeing that the King’s devotion to me does not extend beyond a short prayer a week.”

“You are deceived,” said Gauttier, seating himself at the table. “I can prove to you that love should go through the whole mass, matins, and vespers, with an *ave* now and then, for Queens as for simple women, and go through the ceremony every day, like the monks in their monastery, with fervor; but for you these litanies should never finish.”

The Queen cast upon the knight a glance which was far from one of displeasure, smiled at him, and shook her head.

“In this,” said she, “men are great liars.”

“I have with me a great truth which I will show you when you wish it,” replied the knight. “I undertake to give you Queen’s fare, and put you on the high road to joy; by this means you will make up for lost time, the more so as the King is ruined through other women, while I have reserved my advantages for your service.”

“And if the King learns our arrangement, he will put your head on a level with your feet.”

“Even if this misfortune befell me after the first night, I should believe I had lived a hundred years, from the joy therein received, for never have I seen, after having visited all Courts, a princess fit to hold a candle to your beauty.

To be brief, if I die not by the sword, you will still be the cause of my death, for I am resolved to spend my life in our love, if life will depart in the place whence it comes."

Now this Queen had never heard such words before, and preferred them to the most sweetly sung mass; her pleasure showed itself in her face, which became purple, for these words made her blood boil within her veins, so that the strings of her lute were moved thereat, and struck a sweet note that rang melodiously in her ears, for this lute fills with its music the brain and the body of the ladies, by a sweet artifice of their resonant nature. What a shame to be young, beautiful, Spanish, and Queen, and yet neglected. She conceived an intense disdain for those of her Court who had kept their lips closed concerning this infidelity, through fear of the King, and determined to revenge herself with the aid of this handsome Frenchman, who cared so little for life that in his first words he had staked it in making a proposition to a queen which was worthy of death, if she did her duty. Instead of this, however, she pressed his foot with her own, in a manner that admitted of no misconception, and said aloud to him:

"Sir Knight, let us change the subject, for it is very wrong of you to attack a poor queen in her weak spot. Tell us the customs of the ladies of the Court of France."

Thus did the knight receive the delicate hint that the business was arranged. Then he commenced to talk of merry and pleasant things, which during supper kept the Court, the King, the Queen, and all the courtiers in a good humor; so much so that, when the siege was raised, Leufroid declared that he had never laughed so much in his life. Then they strolled about the gardens, which were the most beautiful in the world, and the Queen made a pretext of the chevalier's sayings to walk beneath a grove of blossoming orange trees, which yielded a delicious fragrance.

"Lovely and noble Queen," said Gauttier, immediately, "I have seen in all countries the perdition of love have its

birth in those first attentions which we call courtesy ; if you have confidence in me, let us agree, as people of high intelligence, to love each other without standing on so much ceremony ; by this means no suspicions will be aroused, our happiness will be less dangerous and more lasting. In this fashion should queens conduct their amours, if they would avoid interference."

"Well said," she replied. "But as I am new at this business, I do not know what arrangements to make."

"Have you among your women one in whom you have perfect confidence?"

"Yes," said she ; "I have a maid who came from Spain with me, who would put herself on a gridiron for my service, like St. Lawrence did for God, but she is always poorly."

"That's good," said her companion, "because you go to see her."

"Yes," said the Queen, "and sometimes at night."

"Ah!" exclaimed Gauttier, "I make a vow to St. Rosalie, patroness of Sicily, to build her a golden altar for this fortune."

"O Jesus!" cried the Queen, "I am doubly blessed in having a lover so handsome and yet so religious."

"Ah, my dear, I have two sweethearts to-day, because I have a queen to love in heaven above and another one here below, and luckily these loves cannot clash the one with the other."

This sweet speech so affected the Queen that for a nothing she would have fled with this cunning Frenchman.

"The Virgin Mary is very powerful in heaven," said the Queen. "Love grant that I may be like her!"

"Bah! they are talking of the Virgin Mary," said the King, who by chance had come to watch them, disturbed by a gleam of jealousy, cast into his heart by a Sicilian courtier, who was furious at the sudden favor which the Frenchman had obtained.

The Queen and the chevlier laid their plans, and everything was secretly arranged to furnish the helmet of the King with two invisible ornaments. The knight rejoined the Court, made himself agreeable to every one, and returned to the palace of Pezare, whom he told that their fortunes were made, because on the mórrow, at night, he would sleep with the Queen. This swift success astonished the Venetian, who, like a good friend, went in search of fine perfumes, linen of Brabant, and precious garments, to which queens are accustomed, with all of which he loaded his friend Gauttier, in order that the casket might be worthy the jewel.

“ Ah, my friend,” said he, “ are you sure not to falter, but to go vigorously to work, to serve the Queen bravely, and give her such joys in her castle of Gallardin that she may hold on forever to this master staff, like a drowning sailor to a plank ? ”

“ As for that, fear nothing, dear Pezare, because I have the arrears of the journey, and I will deal with her as with a simple servant, instructing her in the ways of the ladies of Touraine, who understand love better than all others, because they make it, remake it, and unmake it to make it again ; and having remade it, still keep on making it ; and having nothing else to do, have to do that which always wants doing. Now let us settle our plans. This is how we shall obtain the government of this island. I shall hold the Queen and you the King ; we will play the comedy of being great enemies before the eyes of the courtiers, in order to divide them into two parties under our command, and yet, unknown to all, we will remain friends. By this means we shall know their plots, and will thwart them, you by listening to my enemies and I to yours. In the course of a few days we will pretend to quarrel, in order to strive one against the other. This quarrel will be caused by the favor in which I will manage to place you with the King, through the channel of the Queen, and he will give you supreme power, to my injury.”

On the morrow Gauttier went to the house of the Spanish lady, whom before the courtiers he recognized as having known in Spain, and he remained there seven whole days. As you can imagine, the Tourangeau treated the Queen as a fondly loved woman, and showed her so many unknown lands in love, French fashions, little tendernesses, etc., that she nearly lost her reason through it, and swore that the French were the only people who thoroughly understood love. You see how the King was punished, who, to keep her virtuous, had allowed weeds to grow in the grange of love.

Their supernatural festivities touched the Queen so strongly that she made a vow of eternal love to Montsoreau, who had aroused her by revealing to her the joys of the proceeding. It was arranged that the Spanish lady should take care always to be ill; and that the only man to whom the lovers would confide their secret should be the Court physician, who was much attached to the Queen. By chance this physician had in his glottis chords exactly similar to those of Gauttier, so that by a freak of nature they had the same voice, which much astonished the Queen. The physician swore on his life faithfully to serve the pretty couple, for he deplored the sad desertion of this beautiful woman, and was delighted to know she would be served as a queen should be—a rare thing.

A month elapsed and everything was going on to the satisfaction of the two friends, who worked the plans laid by the Queen, in order to get the government of Sicily into the hands of Pezare, to the detriment of Montsoreau, whom the King loved for his great wisdom; but the Queen would not consent to have him, because he was so ungallant. Leufroid dismissed the Duke of Cataneo, his principal follower, and put the Chevalier Pezare in his place. The Venetian took no notice of his friend the Frenchman. Then Gauttier burst out, declaiming loudly against the treachery and abused friendship of his former comrade, and instantly earned the devotion of Cataneo and his friends, with whom he made a

compact to overthrow Pezare. Directly he was in office, the Venetian, who was a shrewd man, and well suited to govern states, which was the usual employment of Venetian gentlemen, worked wonders in Sicily, repaired the ports, brought merchants thither by the fertility of his inventions and by granting them facilities, put bread into the mouths of hundreds of poor people, and drew also artisans of all trades, because fêtes were always being held; beside the idle and rich from all quarters, even from the East.

Thus harvests, the products of the earth, and other commodities were plentiful; and galleys and ships came from Asia, the which made the King much envied, and the happiest king in the Christian world, because through these things his Court was the most renowned in the countries of Europe. This fine political aspect was the result of the perfect agreement of two men who thoroughly understood each other. The one looked after the pleasures, and was himself the delight of the Queen, whose face was always bright and gay, because she was served according to the method of Touraine, and because animated through excessive happiness; and he also took care to keep the King amused, finding him every day new mistresses, and casting him into a whirl of dissipation. The King was much astonished at the good temper of the Queen, whom, since the arrival of the Sieur de Montsoreau in the island, he had touched no more than a Jew touches bacon. Thus occupied, the King and the Queen abandoned the care of their kingdom to the other friend, who conducted the affairs of government, ruled the establishment, managed the finances, and looked to the army, and all exceedingly well, knowing where money was to be made, enriching the treasury, and preparing all the great enterprises above mentioned.

This state of things lasted three years, some say four, but the monks of Saint-Benoist have not wormed out the date, which remains obscure, like the reasons for the quarrel be-

tween the two friends. Probably the Venetian had the high ambition to reign without any control or dispute, and forgot the services which the Frenchman had rendered him.

Thus do the men who live in courts behave, for, according to the statements of Monsieur Aristotle in his works, that which ages the most rapidly in this world is a kindness, although extinguished love is sometimes very rancid. Now, relying on the perfect friendship of Leufroid, who called him his crony, and would have done anything for him, the Venetian conceived the idea of getting rid of his friend, by revealing to the King the mystery of his cuckoldom, and showing him the source of the Queen's happiness, not doubting for a moment but that he would commence by depriving Montsoreau of his head, according to a practice common in Sicily under similar circumstances. By this means Pezare would have all the money that he and Gauttier had noiselessly conveyed to the house of a Lombard of Genes, which money was their joint property on account of their fraternity. This treasure, increased on one side by the magnificent presents made to Montsoreau by the Queen, who had vast estates in Spain, and other, by inheritance in Italy; on the other, by the King's gifts to his prime minister, to whom he also gave certain rights over the merchants, and other indulgences. The treacherous friend having determined to break his vow, took care to conceal his intention from Gauttier, because the Tourangeau was an awkward man to tackle.

One night that Pezare knew that the Queen was in bed with her lover, who still loved her as though each night were a wedding one, so skillful was he at the business, the traitor promised the King to let him take evidence in the case, through a hole which he had made in the wardrobe of the Spanish lady, who always pretended to be at death's door. In order to obtain a better view, Pezare waited until the sun had risen. The Spanish lady, who was fleet of foot, had a quick eye and a sharp ear, heard footsteps, peeped out, and

perceived the King followed by the Venetian, through a cross-bar in the closet in which she slept on the nights that the Queen had her lover between the sheets, which is certainly the best way to have a lover. She ran to warn the couple of this betrayal. But the King's eye was already at the cursed hole. Leufroid saw—what? That beautiful and divine lantern which burns so much oil and lights the world—a lantern adorned with the most lovely baubles, flaming brilliantly, which he thought more lovely than all the others, because he had lost sight of it for so long a time that it appeared quite new to him; but the size of the hole prevented him seeing anything else, except the hand of a man, which modestly covered the lantern, and he heard the voice of Montsoreau saying :

“How's the little treasure, this morning?”

A playful expression, which lovers use jokingly, because this lantern is in all countries the sun of love, and for this the prettiest possible names are bestowed upon it, while comparing it to the loveliest things in nature, such as my pomegranate, my rose, my little shell, my hedgehog, my gulf of love, my treasure, my master, my little one; some even daring most heretically to say, my god! If you don't believe it, ask your friends.

At this moment the lady let them understand by a gesture that the King was there.

“Can he hear?” said the Queen.

“Yes.”

“Can he see?”

“Yes.”

“Who brought him?”

“Pezare.”

“Fetch the physician, and get Gauttier into his own room,” said the Queen.

In less time than it takes a beggar to say “God bless you, sir!” the Queen had swathed the lantern in linen and paint,

so that you would have thought it a hideous wound in a state of grievous inflammation. When the King, enraged by what he overheard, burst open the door, he found the Queen lying on the bed exactly as he had seen her through the hole, and the physician, examining the lantern swathed in bandages, and saying: "How is the little treasure, this morning?" in exactly the same voice that the King had heard. A jocular and cheerful expression, because physicians and surgeons use cheerful words with ladies and treat this sweet flower with flowery phrases.

This sight made the King look as foolish as a fox caught in a trap. The Queen sprang up, reddening with shame, and asked what man dared to intrude upon her privacy at such a moment, but perceiving the King, she said to him as follows:

"Ah! my lord, you have discovered that which I have endeavored to conceal from you; that I am so badly treated by you that I am afflicted with a burning ailment, of which my dignity would not allow me to complain, but which needs secret dressing in order to assuage the influence of the vital forces. To save my honor and your own, I am compelled to come to my good Lady Miraflor, who consoles me in my troubles."

Then the physician commenced to treat Leufroid to an oration, interlarded with Latin quotations and precious grains from Hippocrates, Galen, the school of Salerno, and others, in which he showed him how necessary to women was the proper cultivation of the field of Venus, and that there was great danger of death to queens of Spanish temperament, whose blood was excessively amorous. He delivered himself of his arguments with great solemnity of feature, voice, and manner, in order to give the Sieur de Montsoreau time to get into bed. Then the Queen took the same text to preach the King a sermon as long as his arm, and requested the loan of that limb, that the King might conduct her to her apartment instead of the poor invalid, who usually did so in order

to avoid calumny. When they were in the gallery where the Sieur de Montsoreau had his apartments, the Queen said jokingly :

“ You should play a good trick on this Frenchman, whom I would wager is with some lady, and not in his own room. All the ladies of Court are in love with him, and there will be mischief some day through him. If you had taken my advice he would not be in Sicily now.”

Leufroid went suddenly into Gauttier’s room, whom he found in a deep sleep, and snoring like a monk in church. The Queen returned with the King, whom she took to her apartments, and whispered to one of the guards to send to her the lord whose place Pezare occupied. Then while she fondled the King, taking breakfast with him, she took the lord, directly he came, into an adjoining room.

“ Erect a gallows on the bastion,” said she, “ then seize the knight Pezare, and manage so that he be hanged instantly, without giving him time to write or say a single word on any subject whatsoever. Such is our good pleasure and supreme command.”

Cataneo made no remark. While Pezare was thinking to himself that his friend Gauttier would soon be minus his head, the Duke Cataneo came to seize and lead him on to the bastion, from which he could see at the Queen’s window the Sieur de Montsoreau in company with the King, the Queen, and the courtiers, and came to the conclusion that he who looked after the Queen had a better chance in everything than he who looked after the King.

“ My dear,” said the Queen to her spouse, leading him to the window, “ behold a traitor, who was endeavoring to deprive you of that which you hold dearest in the world, and I will give you the proofs when you have the leisure to study them.”

Montsoreau, seeing the preparations for the final ceremony, threw himself at the King’s feet, to obtain the pardon of him

who was his mortal enemy, at which the King was much moved.

“Sieur de Montsoreau,” said the Queen, turning toward him with an angry look, “are you so bold as to oppose our will and pleasure?”

“You are a noble knight,” said the King, “but you do not know how bitter this Venetian was against you.”

Pezare was delicately strangled between the head and the shoulders, for the Queen revealed his treacheries to the King, proving to him, by the declaration of a Lombard of the town, the enormous sums which Pezare had in the bank of Genes, the whole of which were given up to Montsoreau.

This noble and lovely Queen died, as related in the history of Sicily, that is, in consequence of a heavy labor, during which she gave birth to a son, who was a man as great in himself as he was unfortunate in his undertakings. The King believed the physician’s statement, that the sad termination of this accouchement was caused by the too chaste life the Queen had led, and, believing himself responsible for it, he founded the church of the Madonna, which is one of the finest in the town of Palermo.

The Sieur de Montsoreau, who was a witness of the King’s remorse, told him that, when a King got his wife from Spain, he ought to know that this Queen would require more attention than any other, because the Spanish ladies were so lively that they equaled ten ordinary women, and that, if he wished a wife for show only, he should get her from the north of Germany, where the women are cold as ice. The good knight came back to Touraine laden with wealth, and lived there many years, but never mentioned his adventures in Sicily. He returned thither to aid the King’s son in his principal attempt against Naples, and left Italy when this sweet prince was wounded, as is related in the histories.

Beside the high moralities contained in the title of this tale,



*IT IS DEMONSTRATED THAT FORTUNE IS FEMININE.*





where it is said that fortune, being female, is always on the side of the ladies, and that men are quite right to serve them well, it shows us that silence is the better part of wisdom. Nevertheless the monkish author of this narrative seems to draw this other no less learned moral therefrom—that interest which makes so many friendships, breaks them also. But from these three versions you can choose the one that best accords with your judgment and your momentary requirements.



## THE ORIGINAL PROLOGUES AND EPILOGUES.

### PROLOGUE.

THIS is a book of the highest flavor, full of right hearty merriment, spiced to the palate of the illustrious and very precious tosspots and drinkers, to whom our worthy compatriot, François Rabelais, the eternal honor of Touraine, addressed himself. Be it nevertheless understood, the author has no other desire than to be a good Tourangeau, and joyfully to chronicle the merry doings of the famous people of this sweet and productive land, more fertile in cuckolds, dandies, and witty wags than any other, and which has furnished a good share of men of renown to France, as witness the departed Courier of piquant memory; Verville, author of the “*Moyen de parvenir*,” and others equally well known, among whom we will specially mention the Sieur Descartes, because he was a melancholy genius, and devoted himself more to brown studies than to drinks and dainties, a man of whom all the cooks and confectioners of Tours have a wise horror, whom they despise, and will not hear spoken of, and say: “Where does he live?” if his name is mentioned. Now this work is the production of the joyous leisure of the good old monks, of whom there are many vestiges scattered about the country, at Grenadière-les-Saint-Cyr, in the village of Sacché-les-Azay-le-Rideau, at Marmoustiers, Veretz, Roche-Carbon, and in certain storehouses of good stories, which storehouses are the upper stories of old canons and wise dames, who remember the good old days when you could enjoy a hearty laugh without looking to see if your hilarity disturbed the sit of your ruffle, as do the young women of the present

day, who wish to take their pleasure gravely—a custom which suits our gay France as much as a water-jug would the head of a queen. Since laughter is a privilege granted to man alone, and he has sufficient causes for tears within his reach, without adding to them by books, I have considered it a thing most patriotic to publish a drachm of merriment for these times, when weariness falls like a fine rain, wetting us, soaking into us, and dissolving those ancient customs which made the people to *reap public* amusement from the *Republic*. But of those old Pantagruelists who allowed God and the King to conduct their own affairs without putting of their finger in the pie oftener than they could help, being content to look on and laugh, there are very few left. They are dying out day by day in such manner that I fear greatly to see these illustrious fragments of the ancient breviary spat upon, staled upon, set at naught, dishonored, and blamed, the which I should be loth to see, since I have and bear great respect for the refuse of our Gallic antiquities.

Bear in mind also, ye wild critics, ye scrapers-up of words, harpies who mangle the intentions and inventions of every one, that as children only do we laugh, and as we travel onward laughter sinks down and dies out, like the light of the oil-lit lamp. This signifies, that to laugh you must be innocent and pure of heart, lacking which qualities you purse your lips, drop your jaws, and knit your brow, after the manner of men hiding vices and impurities. Take, then, this work as you would a group or statue, certain features of which an artist cannot omit, and he would be the biggest of all big fools if he put leaves upon them, seeing that these said works are not, any more than is this book, intended for nunneries. Nevertheless, I have taken care, much to my vexation, to weed from the manuscripts the old words, which, in spite of their age, were still strong, and which would have shocked the ears, astonished the eyes, reddened the cheeks, and sullied the lips of trousered maidens, and Madame

Virtue with three lovers ; for certain things must be done to suit the vices of the age, and a periphrase is much more agreeable than the word. Indeed, we are old, and find long trifles better than the short follies of our youth, because at that time our taste was better. Then spare me your slanders, and read this rather at night than in the daytime, and give it not to young maidens, if there be any, because this book is inflammable. I will now rid you of myself. But I fear nothing for this book, since it is extracted from a high and splendid source, from which all that has issued has had a great success, as is amply proved by the royal orders of the Golden Fleece, of the Holy Ghost, of the Garter, of the Bath, and by many notable things which have been taken therefrom, under shelter of which I place myself.

“ Now make ye merry, my hearties, and gaily read with ease of body and rest of reins, and may a cancer carry you off if you disown me after have read me.” These words are those of our good Master Rabelais, before whom we must all stand, hat in hand, in token of reverence and honor to him, prince of all wisdom, and king of comedy.



## EPILOGUE.

HERE ends the first volume of these Tales, a roguish sample of the works of that merry Muse, born ages ago, in our fair land of Touraine, the which Muse is a good wench, and knows by heart that fine saying of her friend Verville, written in "Le Moyen de Parvenir : " *It is only necessary to be bold to obtain favors.* Alas ! mad little one, get thee to bed again, sleep ; thou art panting from thy journey ; perhaps thou hast been farther than the present time. Now dry thy naked fair feet, stop thine ears, and return to love. If thou dreamest other poesy interwoven with laughter to conclude these merry inventions, heed not the foolish clamor and insults of those who, hearing the carol of a joyous lark of other days, exclaim : Ah, the horrid bird !

(175)

## PROLOGUE.

CERTAIN persons have reproached the Author for knowing no more about the language of the olden times than hares do of telling stories. Formerly these people would have been vilified, called cannibals, churls, and sycophants, and Go-morrah would have been hinted at as their natal place. But the Author consents to spare them these flowery epithets of ancient criticism ; he contents himself with wishing not to be in their skin, for he would be disgusted with himself, and esteem himself the vilest of scribblers thus to calumniate a poor little book which is not in the style of any spoil-paper of these times. Ah ! ill-natured wretches ! you should save your breath to cool your own porridge ! The Author consoles himself for his want of success in not pleasing every one by remembering that an old Tourangeau, of eternal memory, had to put up with such contumely that, losing all patience, he declared in one of his prologues that he “would never more put pen to paper.” Another age, but the same manners. Nothing changes, neither God above nor men below. Therefore the Author continues his task with a light heart, relying upon the future to reward his heavy labors.

And, certes, it is a hard task to invent A HUNDRED DROLL TALES, since not only have ruffians and envious men opened fire upon him, but his friends have imitated their example, and come to him, saying :

“Are you mad ? Do you think it possible ? No man ever had in the depths of his imagination a hundred such tales. Change the hyperbolic title of your budget. You will never finish it.”

These people are neither misanthropes nor cannibals ; whether they are ruffians I know not ; but for certain they

are kind, good-natured friends ; friends who have the courage to tell you disagreeable things all your life long, who are rough and sharp as currycombs, under the pretense that they are yours to command, in all the mishaps of life, and in the hour of extreme unction all their worth will be known. If such people would only keep to these sad kindnesses ; but they will not. When their terrors are proven to have been idle, they exclaim triumphantly : “ Ha ! ha ! I knew it. I always said so.”

In order not to discourage fine sentiments, intolerable though they be, the Author leaves to his friends his old shoes, and, in order to make their minds easy, assures them that he has, legally protected and exempt from seizure, seventy droll stories, in that reservoir of nature, his brain. By the gods ! they are precious yarns, well rigged out with phrases, carefully furnished with catastrophes, amply clothed with original humor, rich in diurnal and nocturnal effects, not lacking that plot which the human race has woven each minute, each hour, each week, month, and year of the great ecclesiastical computation, commenced at a time when the sun could scarcely see, and the moon waited to be shown her way. These seventy subjects which he gives you leave to call bad subjects, full of tricks and impudence, lust, lies, jokes, jests, and ribaldry, joined to the portions here given, are, by the prophet ! a small installment of the aforesaid hundred.

Were it not now a bad time for bibliopolists, bibliomaniacs, bibliographers, and *bibliothèques* which hinder bibliolatry, he would have given them in a bumper, and not drop by drop as if he were afflicted with disury of the brain. He cannot possibly be suspected of this infirmity, since he often gives good weight, putting several stories into one, as is clearly demonstrated by several in this volume. You may rely on it, that he has chosen for the finish the best and most ribald of the lot, in order that he may not be accused of a senile discourse. Put, then, more likes with your dislikes, and dislikes with

your likes. Forgetting the niggardly behavior of nature to story-tellers, of whom there are not more than seven perfect in the great ocean of human writers, others, although friendly, have been of opinion that, at a time when every one went about dressed in black, as if in mourning for something, it was necessary to concoct works either wearisomely serious or seriously wearisome ; that a writer could only live henceforward by enshrining his ideas in some vast edifice, and that those who were unable to reconstruct cathedrals and castles of which neither stone nor cement could be moved, would die unknown, like the pope's slippers. These friends were requested to declare which they liked best, a pint of good wine, or a tun of cheap rubbish ; a diamond of twenty-two carats, or a flint-stone weighing a hundred pounds ; the ring of Hans Carvel, as told by Rabelais, or a modern narrative pitifully expectorated by a schoolboy. Seeing them dumfounded and abashed, it was calmly said to them :

“ Do you thoroughly understand, good people ? Then go your ways, and mind your own business.”

The following, however, must be added, for the benefit of all whom it may concern :

The good man to whom we owe fables and stories of everlasting authority has only used his tool on them, having taken his material from others ; but the workmanship expended on these little figures has given them a high value ; and although he was, like M. Louis Ariosto, vituperated for thinking of idle pranks and trifles, there is a certain insect engraved by him which has since become a monument of perennity more assured than that of the most solidly built works. In the especial jurisprudence of wit and wisdom the custom is to esteem more dearly a leaf wrested from the book of Nature and Truth, than all the indifferent volumes from which, however fine they be, it is impossible to extract either a laugh or a tear. The author has license to say this without any impropriety, since it is not his intention to stand upon tiptoe in order to obtain

an unnatural height, but because it is a question of the majesty of his art, and not of himself—a poor clerk of the court, whose business it is to have ink in his pen, to listen to the gentlemen on the bench, and take down the sayings of each witness in this case. He is responsible for the workmanship, Nature for the rest, since from the Venus of Phidias the Athenian down to the little old fellow Godenot, commonly called the Sieur Breloque, a character carefully elaborated by one of the most celebrated authors of the present day, everything is studied from the eternal model of human imitations which belongs to all. At this honest business, happy are the robbers that are not hanged, but esteemed and beloved. But he is a triple fool, a fool with ten horns on his head, who struts, boasts, and is puffed up at an advantage due to the hazard of dispositions, because glory lies only in the cultivation of the faculties, in patience and courage.

As for the soft-voiced and pretty mouthed ones, who have whispered delicately in the Author's ear, complaining to him that they had disarranged their tresses and spoiled their petticoats in certain places, he would say to them: "Why did you go there?" To these remarks he is compelled, through the notable slanders of certain people, to add a notice to the well-disposed, in order that they may use it, and end the calumnies of the aforesaid scribblers concerning him.

These funny tales are written—according to all authorities—at that period when Queen Catherine, of the house of Medicis, was hard at work; for during a great portion of the reign she was always interfering with public affairs to the advantage of our holy religion. The which time has seized many people by the throat, from our defunct master, Francis, first of the name, to the Assembly at Blois, where fell M. de Guise. Now, even schoolboys who play at chuck-farthing know that at this period of insurrections, pacifications, and disturbances the language of France was a little disturbed also, on account of the inventions of the poets, who at that

time, as at this, used each to make a language for himself, beside the strange Greek, Latin, Italian, German, and Swiss words, foreign phrases, and Spanish jargon, introduced by foreigners, so that a poor writer has plenty of elbow-room in this Babelish language, which has since been taken in hand by Messieurs de Balzac,\* Blaise Pascal, Furetière, Menage, St. Evremond, de Malherbe, and others, who first cleaned out the French language, sent foreign words to the rightabout, and gave the privilege of citizenship to legitimate words used and known by every one, but of which the Sieur Ronsard was ashamed.

Having finished, the author returns to his lady-love, wishing every happiness to those by whom he is beloved ; to the others, misfortune according to their deserts. When the swallows fly homeward, he will come again, not without the third and fourth volume, which he here promises to the Pantagruelists, merry knaves, and honest wags of all degrees, who have a wholesome horror of the sadness, sombre meditation and melancholy of literary croakers.

\* Referring to Seigneur Jean-Louis-Guez de Balzac. He died 1654.



## EPILOGUE.

ALTHOUGH this second volume has on its frontispiece an inscription which declares it to have been finished in a time of snows and chills, it comes in the merry month of June, when all is green and gay, because the poor Muse, whose slave the author is, has been more capricious than the love of a queen, and has mysteriously wished to bring forth her fruit in the time of flowers. No one can boast himself master of this fay. At times, when grave thoughts occupy the mind and grieve the brain, comes the jade whispering her merry tales in the author's ear, tickling his lips with her feathers, dancing sarabands, and making the house echo with her laughter. If by chance the writer, abandoning science for pleasure, says to her: "Wait a moment, little one, till I come," and runs in great haste to play with the madcap, she has disappeared. She has gone back into her hole, hides herself there, rolls herself up, and retires. Take the poker, take a staff, a cudgel, a cane, raise them, strike the wench, and rave at her, she moans; strap her, she moans; caress her, fondle her, she moans; kiss her, say to her:

"Here, little one," she moans. Now she's cold, now she's going to die; adieu to love, adieu to laughter, adieu to merriment, adieu, good stories. Wear mourning for her, weep and fancy her dead, groan. Then she raises her head, her merry laugh rings out again; she spreads her white wings, flies one knows not whither, turns in the air, capers, shows her impish tail, her woman's breasts, her strong loins and her angelic face, shakes her perfumed tresses, gambols in the rays of the sun, shines forth in all her beauty, changes her colors like the breast of a dove, laughs until she cries, casts the tears of her eyes into the sea, where the fishermen find them transmuted

into pretty pearls which are gathered to adorn the foreheads of queens. She twists about like a colt broken loose, exposing her virgin charms, and a thousand things so fair that a pope would peril his salvation for her at the mere sight of them. During these wild pranks of the ungovernable beast, you meet fools and friends, who say to the poor poet :

“ Where are your tales ? Where are your new volumes ? You’re a pagan prognosticator. Oh yes, you are known. You go to fêtes and feasts, and do nothing between your meals. Where’s your work ? ”

Although I am by nature partial to kindness, I should like to see one of these people impaled in the Turkish fashion, and thus equipped, sent on the Love Chase. Here endeth the second volume ; may the devil give it a lift with his horns, and it will be well received by a smiling Christendom.



## PROLOGUE.

CERTAIN persons have interrogated the Author as to why there was such a demand for these tales that no year passes without his giving an installment of them, and why he has lately taken to write asterisks mixed up with bad syllables, at which the ladies publicly knit their brows, and have put to him other questions of a like character. The Author declares that these treacherous words, cast like pebbles in his path, have touched him in the very depths of his heart, and he is sufficiently cognizant of his duty not to fail to give to his special audience in this prologue certain reasons other than preceding ones, because it is always necessary to reason with children until they are grown up, understand things, and hold their tongues; and because he perceives many mischievous fellows among this crowd of noisy people, who ignore at pleasure the real object of these volumes. In the first place, know that if certain virtuous ladies—I say virtuous because common and low-class women do not read these stories, preferring those that are never published; on the contrary, other citizens' wives and ladies of high respectability and godliness, although doubtless disgusted with the subject matter, read them piously to satisfy an evil spirit, and thus keep themselves virtuous. Do you understand, my good reapers of horns? It is better to be deceived by the tale of a book than cuckolded through the story of a gentleman. You are saved the damage by this, poor fools! beside which, often your lady becoming enamored, is seized with fecund agitations to your advantage, raised in her by the present book. Therefore do these volumes assist to populate the land and maintain it in mirth, honor, and health. I say mirth, because much is to be derived from these tales. I say honor, because you save your nest from the

claws of that youthful demon named cuckoldom in the language of the Celts. I say health, because this book incites that which was prescribed by the church of Salerno, for the avoidance of cerebral plethora. Can you derive a like proof in any other typographically blackened folios?

Ha ! ha ! where are the books that make children? Think! Nowhere. But you will find a glut of children making books which beget nothing but weariness.

But to continue. Now be it known that when ladies, of a virtuous nature and talkative turn of mind, converse publicly on the subject of these volumes, a great number of them, far from reprimanding the author, confess that they like him very much, esteeming him a valiant man, worthy to be a monk in the abbey of Thelème. For as many reasons as there are stars in the heavens, he does not drop the style which he has adopted in these said tales, but lets himself be vituperated, and keeps steadily on his way, because noble France is a woman who refuses to yield, crying, twisting about, and saying :

“No, no ; never ! Oh, sir, what are you going to do ? I won’t let you ; you’d rumple me.” And when the volume is done and finished, all smiles, she exclaims : “Oh, my master, are there no more to come ?”

You may take it for granted that the Author is a merry fellow who troubles himself little about the cries, tears, and tricks of the lady you call glory, fashion, or public favor, for he knows her to be a wanton who would put up with any violence. He knows that in France her war-cry is : “Mount Joy !” A fine cry, indeed, but one which certain writers have disfigured, and which signifies : “Joy is not of the earth, it is there ; seize it, otherwise good-by.” The Author has this interpretation from Rabelais, who told it him. If you search history, has France ever breathed a word when she was joyously mounted, bravely mounted, passionately mounted, mounted and out of breath ? She goes furiously at every-

thing, and likes this exercise better than drinking. Now, do you not see that these volumes are French, joyfully French, wildly French, French before, French behind, French to the backbone? Back, then, curs! strike up the music; silence, bigots! advance, my merry wags, my little pages, put your soft hands into the ladies' hands and tickle them in the middle—of the hand of course. Ha! ha! these are high-sounding and peripatetic reasons, or the Author knows nothing of sound and the philosophy of Aristotle. He has on his side the crown of France and the oriflamme of the King and Monsieur St. Denys, who, having lost his head, said: “Mount-my-Joy!” Do you mean to say, you quadrupeds, that the word is wrong? No. It was certainly heard by a great many people at the time; but in these days of deep wretchedness you believe nothing concerning the good old saints.

The Author has not finished yet. Know, all ye who read these tales with eye and hand, feel them in the head alone, and love them for the joy they bring you, and which goes to your heart, know that the Author having, in an evil hour, let his ideas, *id est*, his inheritance, go astray, and being unable to get them together again, found himself in a state of mental nudity. Then he cried like the woodcutter in the prologue of the book of his dear master, Rabelais, in order to make himself heard by the gentleman on high, Lord Paramount of all things, and obtain from Him fresh ideas. This said Most High, still busy with the congress of the time, threw to him through Mercury an inkstand with two cups, on which was engraved, after the manner of a motto, these three letters, *ave*. Then the poor fellow, perceiving no other help, took great care to turn over this said inkstand to find out the hidden meaning of it, thinking over the mysterious words and trying to find a key to them.

First, he saw that God was polite, like a great Lord as He is, because the world is His, and He holds the title of it from no one. But since, in thinking over the days of his youth,

he remembered no great service rendered to God, the Author was in doubt concerning this hollow civility, and pondered long without finding out the real substance of this celestial utensil. By reason of turning and twisting it about, studying it, looking at it, feeling it, emptying it, knocking it in an interrogatory manner, smacking it down, standing it up straight, standing it on one side, and turning it upside down, he read backward *Eva*. Who is *Eva*, if not all women in one? Therefore by the Voice Divine was it said to the Author:

Think of woman ; woman will heal thy wound, stop the waste-hole in thy bag of tricks. Woman is thy wealth ; have but one woman, dress, undress, and fondle that woman—make use of the woman—woman is everything—woman has an ink-stand of her own ; dip thy pen in that bottomless inkstand. Woman likes love ; make love to her with the pen only, tickle her fantasies, and sketch merrily for her a thousand pictures of love in a thousand pretty ways. Woman is generous, and all for one, or one for all, must pay the painter, and furnish the hairs of the brush. Now, muse upon that which is written there. *Ave-hail, Eva-woman* ; or *Eva-woman, Ave-hail*. Yes, she makes and unmakes.

Heigho, then for the inkstand ! What does woman like best? What does she desire? All the special things of love ; and woman is right. To have children, to produce in imitation of nature, which is always in labor. Come to me, then, woman!—come to me, *Eva*! With this the Author began to dip into that fertile inkpot, where there was a brain-fluid, concocted by virtues from on high in a talismanic fashion. From one cup there came serious things, which wrote themselves in brown ink ; and from the other trifling things, which merely gave a roseate hue to the pages of the manuscript. The poor Author has often, from carelessness, mixed the inks now here, now there ; but so soon as the heavy sentences, difficult to smooth, polish, and brighten up, of some work suitable to the taste of the day are finished, the Author, eager to amuse him-

self, in spite of the small amount of merry ink remaining in the left cup, steals and bears eagerly therefrom a few pensuls with great delight. These said pensuls are, indeed, these same Droll Stories, the authority of which is above suspicion, because it flows from a divine source, as is shown in this the Author's naïve confession.

Certain evil-disposed people will still cry out at this ; but can you find a man perfectly contented on this lump of mud ? Is it not a shame ? In this the Author has wisely comported himself in imitation of a higher power ; and he proves it by *atqui*. Listen. Is it not most clearly demonstrated to the learned that the sovereign Lord of worlds has made an infinite number of heavy, weighty, and serious machines with great wheels, large chains, terrible notches, and frightfully complicated screws and weights like the roasting-jack, but also has amused Himself with little trifles and grotesque things light as zephyrs, and has also made naïve and pleasant creations, at which you laugh directly you see them. Is it not so ? Then in all eccentric works, such as the very spacious edifice undertaken by the Author, in order to model himself upon the laws of the above-named Lord, it is necessary to fashion certain delicate flowers, pleasant insects, fine dragons well twisted, imbricated, and colored—nay, even gilt, although he is often short of gold—and throw them at the feet of his snow-clad mountains, piles of rocks, and other cloud-capped philosophies, long and terrible works, marble columns, real thoughts carved in porphyry.

Ah ! unclean beasts who despise and repudiate the figures, fantasies, harmonies, and roulades of the fair Muse of drollery, will you not pare your claws, so that you may never again scratch her white skin, all azure with veins, her amorous reins, her flanks of surpassing elegance, her feet that stay modestly in bed ; her satin face, her lustrous features, her heart devoid of bitterness ? Ah ! wooden-heads, what will you say when you find that this merry lass springs from the heart of France,

agrees with all that is womanly in nature, has been saluted with a polite *ave!* by the angels in the person of their spokesman, Mercury, and finally is the clearest quintessence of Art. In this work are to be met with necessity, virtue, whim, the desire of a woman, the votive offering of a stout Pantagruelist, all are here. Hold your peace, then, drink to the Author, and let his inkstand with the double cup endow the Gay Science with a hundred glorious Droll Stories.

Stand back, then, curs; strike up the music! Silence, bigots; out of the way, dunces! Step forward, my merry wags!—my little pages! give your soft hand to the ladies, and tickle them in the centre in a pretty manner, saying to them: “Read to laugh.” Afterward you can tell them some merry jest to make them roar, since when they are laughing their lips are apart, and they make but a faint resistance to love.



## EPILOGUE.

AH ! mad little one, thou whose business it is to make the house merry, again hast thou been wallowing, in spite of a thousand prohibitions, in that slough of melancholy, whence thou hast already fished out Bertha, and come back with thy tresses disheveled, like a girl who has been ill-treated by a regiment of soldiers ! Where are thy golden aigrettes and bells, thy filigree flowers of fantastic design ? Where hast thou left thy crimson head-dress, ornamented with precious gewgaws, that cost a minot\* of pearls ? Why spoil with pernicious tears thy black eyes, so pleasant when therein sparkles the wit of a tale, that popes pardon thee thy sayings for the sake of thy merry laughter, feel their souls caught between the ivory of thy teeth, have their hearts drawn by the rose-point of thy sweet tongue, and would barter the holy slipper for a hundred of the smiles that hover round thy vermillion lips ? Laughing lassie, if thou wouldest remain always fresh and young, weep no more ; think of riding the bridleless fleas, of bridling with the golden clouds thy chameleon chimeras, of metamorphosing the realities of life into figures clothed with the rainbow, caparisoned with roseate dreams, and mantled with wings blue as the eyes of the partridge. By the Body and the Blood, by the Censer and the Seal, by the Book and the Sword, by the Rag and the Gold, by the Sound and the Color, if thou dost but return once into that hovel of elegies where eunuchs find ugly women for imbecile sultans, I'll curse thee ; I'll rave at thee ; I'll make thee fast from roguery and love ; I'll—

Phist ! Here she is astride a sunbeam, with a volume that is ready to burst with merry meteors ! She plays in their

\* A measure containing three bushels.

prisms, tearing about so madly, so wildly, so boldly, so contrary to good sense, so contrary to good manners, so contrary to everything, that one has to touch her with long feathers to follow her siren's tail in the golden facets which trifle among the artifices of these new peals of laughter. Ye gods ! but she is sporting herself in them like a hundred schoolboys in a hedge full of blackberries, after vespers.

To the devil the magister ! The volume is finished ! Out upon work ! What ho ! my jovial friends ; this way !



## PROLOGUE.

[Originally prefacing "The Succubus."]

A NUMBER of persons of the noble country of Touraine, considerably edified by the warm search which the Author is making into the antiquities, adventures, good jokes, and pretty tales of that blessed land, and believing for certain that he should know everything, have asked him (after drinking with him of course understood), if he had discovered the etymological reason, concerning which all the ladies of the town are so curious, and from which a certain street in Tours is called the Rue Chaude. By him was it replied, that he was much astonished to see that the ancient inhabitants had forgotten the great number of convents situated in this street, where the severe continence of the monks and the nuns might have caused the walls to be made so hot that no woman of position but should increase in size from walking too slowly along them to vespers.

A troublesome fellow, wishing to appear learned, declared that formerly all the scandal-mongers of the neighborhood were wont to meet in this place. Another entangled himself in the minute suffrages of science, and poured forth golden words without being understood, qualifying terms, harmonizing the melodies of the ancient and the modern, congregating customs, distilling verbs, alchemizing all languages since the Deluge, of the Hebrews, Chaldeans, Egyptians, Greeks, Latins, and of Turnus, the ancient founder of Tours; and the good man finished by declaring the Chaude or Chaulde, with the exception of H, E, L, came from *Cauda*, and that there was a tail in the affair, but the ladies only understood the end of it. An old man observed that in this same place was formerly a

font of thermal water, of which his great-great-grandfather had drunk. In short, in less time than it takes a fly to embrace its sweetheart, there had been given a pocketful of etymologies, in which the truth of the matter had been less easily found than a louse in the filthy beard of a Capuchin friar.

But a man learned and well informed, through having left his footprints in many monasteries, consumed much midnight oil and manured his brain with many a volume—himself more cumbered with pieces, dyptic fragments, boxes, charters, and registers concerning the history of Touraine than is a gleaner with stalks of straw in the month of August—this man, old, infirm, and gouty, who had been drinking in his corner without saying a word, smiled the smile of a wise man and knitted his brows, the said smile finally resolving itself into a *pish!* well articulated, which the Author heard and understood it to be big with an adventure historically good, the delights of which he would be able to unfold in this sweet collection.

To be brief, on the morrow this gouty old fellow said to him:

“ By your poem, which is called ‘The Venial Sin,’ you have forever gained my esteem, because everything therein is true from head to foot—which I believe to be a precious superabundance in like matters. But doubtless you do not know what became of the Moor placed in religion by the said knight, Bruyn de la Roche-Carbon. I know very well. Now if this etymology of the street harass you, and also the Egyptian nun, I will lend you a curious and antique parchment, found by me in the *Olim* of the episcopal palace, of which the libraries were a little knocked about at a period when none of us knew if he would have the pleasure of his head’s society on the morrow. Now will not this yield you a perfect contentment? ”

“ Good! ” said the Author.

Then this worthy collector of truths gave certain rare and

dusty parchments to the Author, the which he has, not without great labor, translated into French, and which were fragments of a most ancient ecclesiastical process. He has believed that nothing would be more amusing than the actual resurrection of this antique affair, wherein shines forth the illiterate simplicity of the good old times. Now, then, give ear. This is the order in which were the manuscripts, of which the Author has made use in his own fashion, because the language was devilishly difficult.





SCENES FROM THE  
COMÉDIE HUMAINE

by  
HONORÉ DE BALZAC

---

SARRASINE  
A PASSION IN THE DESERT  
THE GIRL WITH GOLDEN EYES



## SARRASINE.

TRANSLATED BY JNO. RUDD, B.A.

*To Monsieur Charles de Bernard du Grail.*

I WAS plunged in one of those profound reveries that at times seize all the world, my bosom heaved with emotion, although I am but a thoughtless fellow. Midnight had just been proclaimed by the clock of l'Élysée-Bourbon. Seated in the bay of a window, concealed behind the undulating folds of a moire curtain, I could contemplate at my ease the garden of the hôtel at which I was passing my evening.

The trees, partially covered with snow, formed the seeming groundwork of the grayish clouds which draped the sky, the edges of which were barely whitened by the rays of the moon. The atmosphere assumed such fantastic shapes that it resembled vaguely the spectres of the newly dead robed in their winding-sheets, their breasts tumultuously heaving, forming a gigantic imagery of the famous Dance of Death. Then, on turning to the other side, I was there able to admire the dance of life ! A splendid salon, the walls rich with gold and silver, furnished with scintillating lustres and brilliant with the light of wax-candles. The most beautiful women in Paris were swarming there, moving and fluttering around ; the richest, of the noblest titles, illustrious and stately women, dazzling with their diamonds ! their heads decked with flowers, flowers on the breast, in the hair, sewn on their dresses, and drooping in garlands to their feet. There was a gentle, voluptuous rustling of lace as the fair women strolled around, the gauze and silk fluttering about their dainty figures. Here and there one would be seen so radiant and bright as to eclipse the lights and the fire of the diamonds, and who animated the heart

with a sense of exuberance. One can note the significant little shakes of the lovers' heads, and the negative gestures of the married. The uproar of voices as the gamblers make an unlooked-for stroke, the jingle of the gold, the murmur of conversation form a musical medley ; the result of this bewildering crush in the perfumed air is an imagination intoxicated by love, akin to real drunkenness. Thus, on my right, the sombre and silent image of death ; to my left, the fit scene of the bacchanalian revel of life ; here nature frigid, dark, and in mourning ; there man in full enjoyment. To me, on the outside of these two so incongruous scenes, a thousand times repeated, in divers manners, Paris becomes the most joyous and the most philosophical town in the world ; I make of it a moral medley, half-jolly, half-funereal. I mark time with my left foot, the while my other is in a coffin. My leg was, as it were, frozen by the breath of one of those keen winds which freeze one side of the body, while the other experienced the moist warmth of the salon, as so frequently occurs at a ball.

“Has not Monsieur de Lanty owned this hôtel for a long time ?”

“Excuse me, yes. Say about ten years, since the Maréchal de Carigliano sold it to him.”

“Ah !”

“These people must have an immense fortune ?”

“It is a good fault.”

“What a festival ! It is the insolence of extravagance.”

“Do you think they are as rich as Monsieur de Nucingen or Monsieur de Gondreville ?”

“But you do not think so, eh ?”

I peered out and recognized the two interlocutors as belonging to that class in Paris whose sole occupation in life is asking : “Why ? How ? How comes it ? Who are they ? There is what ? What are the facts ?” To draw to one side and speak in low tones to one's other self causes the utmost joy to such, it is a benison to the solitary couch. The mere

look of one of these is fruitful to the delver in mysteries. It was unknown to what country the Lanty family belonged ; also how a fortune estimated at many millions had been accumulated, by what trade, what extortions, spoliations, or piracy. All the members of this family spoke Italian, French, Spanish, English, and German with sufficient fluency to cause a belief that a long time had been passed in those different nations. Were they Bohemians ? Were they buccaneers ?

“ It is the devil ! the youngest even keeps the secret admirably.”

“ The Comte de Lanty robbed some ‘ Casbah,’ I guess ; you can dot it down in your philosophy, though, that I should not object to marrying his fair daughter ! ”

Who but would have married Marianina, a young maiden of sixteen, whose beauty realized the fabulous conceptions of the Eastern poets ? Like the daughter of the sultan in “ The Wonderful Lamp,” she was kept from the public gaze. The incomplete talent of Malibran, Sontag, and Toder paled before her song, for its completeness dominated their best efforts ; while Marianina understood equally well how to unite their purity and sensibility with her accuracy of movement and intonation and their soul and science to a correct sentiment. This girl was a type of that poetic seclusion, a feeling common in all the arts, which flees from all who would intrude. Gentle and modest, learned and witty, no one could excel Marianina save, perhaps, her mother.

Have you never met women whose fierce beauty defies the onslaught of age, and who seem more to be desired at thirty-six than some who have yet to see fifteen ? Their faces flash with the soul of passion ; every feature scintillating with intelligence, each showing its own peculiar beauty, but above all its brightness. Their seducing eyes attract, repel, speak, or compel silence ; their walk is that of innocent knowledge ; their voices display their rich melodious tones, most sweetly coquettish and tender. Comparison cannot say which affords

the most pleasure—self-love or the endearing praise. A slight movement of their eyebrows, the least play of the eyes, the lips frowning to themselves, impress with a kind of terror those to whom they dispense life and happiness. A young girl inexperienced in love and of easy conversation one may be able to seduce; but for this kind of woman, a man that knows, like M. de Jaucourt, will not cry aloud when hiding in one's closet, like a chambermaid who has trapped two of her fingers in the joint of a door. Is not this play of love, to these so potent sirens, their life? It may be for this cause that we love them so passionately! Of such was the Comtesse de Lanty.

Filippo, the brother of Marianina, like his sister, possessed the striking beauty of the countess. In one word, this young man was the living image of Antinois, but slimmer. But these thin and delicate proportions suited him well; and, when united to his tawny complexion, to his bushy eyebrows and velvety fire of his eyes, promised well for the future of manly passions and of generous sentiments! If Filippo remained an image in the hearts of all young damsels, he was equally enshrined in the memory of all the mothers as the better side of France.

The beauty, fortune, spirit, the graces of these two children were the mother's greatest solace. The Comte de Lanty was little, ugly, and thin; dark as a Spaniard, dull as a banker. He passed in most places for a profound statesman, perhaps because he so rarely spoke, the same as M. de Metternich or Wellington.

This mysterious family had quite the attraction of a poem by Lord Byron, whose difficulties were translated in a different manner by each member of the world of fashion; a song, at once obscure and sublime, stanza piled on stanza. The reserve kept by M. and Mme. de Lanty on their birth, their past life, and their acquaintance with the four quarters of the earth, for a long time was a matter of astonishment to Paris.

Perhaps it might be better to do as Vespasian did and include the whole country. There the crowns had the same blemish whether of blood or mud ; it was a trifle without spite, and affected all. Provided that high society bags the figure of your fortune you are classed among the number to which your fortune is equal ; your parchment is not demanded, inasmuch as all the world knows how much or how little it cost. In a town where social problems are resolved by algebraic equations, adventurers stand excellent chances. Even supposing this family had its origin in Bohemia, they were rich and charming ; high society can pardon the former and condone the little mysteries. But, for their sins, the enigmatical history of the Lanty family afforded a perpetual topic for interested curiosity, quite as much so as the romances of Anne Radcliffe. The observing, those people whose relations know at what store you buy your candlesticks, and ask the rent of the apartments you occupy, "it so much resembles theirs," after a time remarked the apparition of a strange person among the guests at the excellent festivals, concerts, balls, and *routs* given by the countess. It was a man. The first time he came to the hôtel was during a concert, when he seemed to have been attracted to the drawing-room by Marianina's charming voice.

"I was chilled for the moment," said a lady near the door to her neighbor.

The unknown, when he found himself by this woman, went elsewhere.

"This is strange ! I am now warm again," said the woman after the stranger had gone. "You may accuse me of folly, but you cannot prevent my believing that this evil one, as he came between yourself and me, caused that cold chill."

Very soon, with the exaggeration natural to high society, sprang forth an accumulation of talk expressive of the most fantastical ideas, together with the most ridiculous stories of

this mysterious person. Without exactly being a vampire, a ghoul, an artificial man, a sort of Faust or Robin of the Woods to these so fantastic people, he partook, so they said, the nature of an anthropomorphite. Here he was recognized as being like the Germans who accept as realities the ingenious raillery of Parisian slander. The stranger was simply an *old man*. Many of the young men, accustomed to quick decisions, who each morning decided the future of Europe, in an elegantly turned sentence, could see in the unknown some great criminal possessed of enormous wealth. What romantic tales they told of the life of this old man, the details they gave being really singular, of the atrocities he had committed in the past when he was a deputy of the Prince of Mysore. Even bankers, the most positive of people, helped establish the specious story.

“ Bah ! ” said one, with a pitying shrug of his shoulder, “ this little old man is a *tête genoise* ! ”

“ Monsieur, if I am not too indiscreet, may I beg an explanation of the meaning of a *tête genoise* ? ”

“ Monsieur, on the life of this man an enormous capital is placed, and, without doubt, on his good health the revenues of this family depend. I have been given to understand that a magnetizer at Madame d’Espard’s proved, though it has but a flimsy foundation, that this old man, set under the glass, was the famous Balsamo, otherwise Cagliostro. According to this modern alchemist the Sicilian adventurer escaped death, and proceeded to amuse himself by making gold for his little children. In a word, the steward of Ferette pretended to recognize in this singular person the Comte de Saint-Germain.”

This silliness, spoken in a gentle tone, with the air of railery of our day, was characteristic of a society without beliefs, and touched the house of Lanty with vague suspicion. Again, by a singular combination of circumstances, the members of this family justified the verdict of the world by their conduct in housing this mysterious old man, whose life was in some

sort concealed from all investigations. This person, who had the right of entrance given when it became the hôtel Lanty, always caused a great sensation in the family by his appearance. It was, in a word, a most important event. Filippo, Marianina, Mme. de Lanty, and an old servant only were allowed to assist the old man in his walks, his uprisings, and his down-sittings. Each one watched carefully his every movement. It seemed as though they were only too pleased to give attentive care to one upon whose life depended the fortune of all. Was this love or fear? People of the world could only infer, without being able to discover a solution of the problem. During the whole month this familiar genie was hidden in the depths of an unknown sanctuary, whence he made his appearance in the middle of the salon in a manner so stealthy as to remind one of those fairies of bygone days who descended on their flying dragons and caused troubles to befall because he had not been made the chief guest. Only the more quick-witted could detect at that time the uneasiness of their hosts, their feelings were disguised with such marvelous ability. But, sometimes, when all were dancing a quadrille, the too-ingenuous Marianina would regard the old man with a look of terror when she noticed him in the midst of the groups. Or the good Filippo would dart through the thick of the crowd to join him and stay with him, tender and attentive, as if the contact of men or the least cold breath should injure this strange creature. The countess made it her duty to join him without ostensibly giving an appearance of so doing; afterward her manner and physiognomy showed as much servility as affection, a despotic submission, as she spoke a few words to the old man, almost always appearing to yield to him.

If Madame de Lanty was absent the count used a thousand devices to keep his company; but he had the air of disliking the audience, and their treaty seemed like that between a mother and a spoiled child, who has been given way to in his

every caprice, in its refractoriness being soothed. Any indiscreet person who might rashly think of questioning the Comte de Lanty would abandon the interrogation of the curious when he noted the cold reserve of the man. Beside, what good would result when the circumspection of this family rendered futile all attempts at discovery; it was useless for people to try and search out a so well-guarded a secret. The espionage of good society, the cockney, and the politician, had ceased, they were tired of the war and busied themselves no more with this mystery.

But, at this instant, one might have heard, perhaps, in the midst of the salon, so resplendent with philosophers, each of whom is taking an ice, a sherbet, or placing a glass, just emptied of its contents of punch, on a console, these words:

“I cannot comprehend why the folk here should have so knavish-looking an appendage. This old fellow who is hidden, to all appearance, from the equinoxes to the solstices has to me the air of an assassin——”

“Or of a bankrupt——”

“It is the same thing. Kill the fortune of a man and you sometimes do worse than by slaying him.”

“Monsieur, I have bet twenty louis on forty.”

“My faith, monsieur, thirty remains on the board yet!”

“Eh, well, you see, like the society here, it is mixed! Still one must not be afraid to play.”

“That’s true. But we soon shall have six months of rest of mind. Do you really believe that this thing can be a living being?”

“Eh! eh! At the most——”

These last words had been spoken near me about the unknown as I resumed, in a last thought, my reflections, a mingling of black and white, of life and of death. My crazy imagination, as much as my eyes, contemplated by turns the festival, now at its acme of splendor, and the sombre picture of the gardens. I knew not how long time I had been medi-

tating on these two sides of the human medal ; but on a sudden the stifled laugh of a young woman aroused me. I stood petrified at the appearance of the image offered to my view. By one of Nature's rarest caprices, the thoughts in half-mourning that rolled through my brain were here before me personified, alive ; like Minerva, who emanated from Jupiter's head, so had she arisen great and powerful ; she was at once one hundred years old and two and twenty ; she was living and dead.

Without a doubt, the little old man had escaped from his chamber like a lunatic out of his cell ; he slipped nimbly behind a fence of people who were listening attentively to the voice of Marianina as she finished the cavatina from "*Tancred*." He seemed to have sprung from the nether world, ejected by the stage mechanism of a theatre-trap. Motionless and sombre, he stood a moment and contemplated the fête, the murmur of which had perhaps reached his ears. His pre-occupation was nearly somnambulic, and was concentrated upon one object which he had found in the middle of the world without seeing the world. He was pushing without the least ceremony against one of the most ravishing women in Paris, a young and handsome dancer, with a lissome form, who had all the freshness of a child, and was white and rosy as a young girl, and so transparent that when she turned to regard a man she seemed to penetrate him like the rays of the sun traverse pellucid ice. They were there, before me, both of them together, locked in one, the stranger and the other in the gauze dress, the garlands of flowers, the slightly curled hair, and the flowing sash.

I had brought this young woman to Mme. de Lanty's ball. Most likely it was her first time in the house, so I readily excused the stifled laugh ; but, to my amazement, I noticed her give an imperious token of respect to her neighbor. She seated herself near me. The old man would not leave this delightful creature, to whom he was so capriciously attached,

but stayed, with dumb obstinacy and without any apparent regard to the great difference in their ages, like a child.

He took a folding-chair to enable him to sit down near the young lady. His least movement impressed one, in its gravity of slowness and stupid indecision, as characteristic of the movements of a paralytic. He took his position on the seat slowly and with much circumspection, the while he muttered some unintelligible speech. His broken voice resembled that caused by dropping a stone down a well. The young woman pressed my hand tightly, as if seeking protection against being dashed down this seeming precipice of a man; he turned on her two cold eyes, two glaucous eyes which could only be compared to tarnished mother-of-pearl.

“I am afraid,” she said, bending to speak in my ear.

“You may speak up,” I at once answered; “he is hard of hearing.”

“You know him then?”

“Yes.”

After a while she became bold enough to examine this nameless creature, this form without substance, existence without life, or life without emotion. She was under that spell of timid curiosity which causes such terrible emotions in women, so as when they see chained tigers, or gaze on boa-constrictors, they are always fearful that the separating barriers are insufficiently strong. Although the little old man had a back crooked like a laborer’s, one could readily perceive that in other respects he had the shape of an ordinary being. His extreme emaciation, the attenuation of his limbs, showed conclusively that he must always have been thin. He wore black silk breeches, which hung loosely about his fleshless thighs in a series of straight folds, like an abature veil. An anatominist would at once recognize the symptoms of a frightful decline when he saw the little legs which served to carry that strange body. You would have said they were the two cross-bones fit to be set on a tomb. A fearsome horror

seized the heart when one's attention revealed the indelibly stamped signs of the decrepitude of that fragile machine.

The unknown wore a white vest, trimmed with gold embroidery, in the old-fashioned style, and his linen was of a glossy white. A scarlet frill of English lace, rich enough to be the envy of a queen, surrounded his head, while on his breast he wore a yellow ruche ; but on him the lace was rather a rag or tatter than an ornament. In the centre of the frill was a diamond of incalculable value, which scintillated like a sun. These luxurious fixings, the intrinsic value displayed without taste, seemed somehow suited to the figure of this fantastic being. The frame was worthy the picture. The dark face was angulous and deeply furrowed in every direction. The chin was peaky, the temples sunken, and the eyes were lost in their cavernous yellow orbits.

The deserted jawbones projected out in indescribable lean-ness, and showed great cavities in the middle of each cheek. These protuberances, more or less illumined by the candle-light, caused shadows and curious reflections which seemed to remove the last vestiges of the characteristics of the human face. The past years had firmly pasted the yellow skin on the bones and finished off the face ; which showed every-where a multitude of wrinkles, and circles like those made in water when a child has thrown in a pebble, or stars like those shown on a cracked window-pane, but each one deep and flattened out like the leaves in the edges of a book.

Some old men, of whom we present the portraits, are often more hideous ; but what most contributed to give an appear-ance of artificial creation to this spectre was the unexpected red and white with which he shone. The eyebrows of his mask received a lustre from the light which revealed a paint-ing finely executed. Fortunately for the view, his cadaverous skull was hidden under a white peruke, whose innumerable curls betrayed great pretensions.

As for the rest, the feminine coquetry of this phantasma-

goric personage was unmistakably announced by the ear-drops of gold pendant from his ears, by the beautiful stone brilliants on his bony fingers, and by a watch-chain which glittered like a circlet of rhinestones on the neck of a woman. To conclude, this imitation of a Japanese idol perpetually wore on his lips a fixed smile of decision, implacable and jeering, a smile like that of a death's head.

Silent and motionless as a statue, she exhaled the musky odor of old dresses, the heritage of a duchess, and which she had exhumed from a drawer during the making of the inventory. If the old man turned his eyes upon the company, which he did by an imperceptible motion, they seemed like two globes quite incapable of reflecting a glimmer of light; when they were arrested by any object, it seemed doubtful if they would ever move again. Seen near this human refuse was this young woman whose neck, arms, and body were white and shapely, the whole form redolent of beauty, with luxuriant hair growing over a love-inspiring forehead of alabaster, her eyes not absorbing but emanating light; delightfully sweet, fresh, and fragrant, with flowing curls and balmy breath—a too all-powerful contrast to that dullest, most earthy shadow, this man of dust: ah! this was indeed death and life. My thoughts became an imaginary arabesque—one-half a hideous chimera and half a divine femininity.

“And yet there are often marriages arranged between such in the world,” I said to myself.

“It were a sentence to the scimitar!” was written by the young woman’s horror. She pressed closer to me as though to assure herself of my protection, and her tumultuousness spoke the great horror she felt.

“This is a terrible sight,” she said. “I cannot stand it much longer. If I look at it again I shall think that Death himself has come to look me up. But, what is it?”

She laid her hand on that of the phenomenon with the boldness caused by the violence of the power of her longing;

but a cold sweat broke from every pore, and, as soon as she touched the old man she gave a short cry like that of a hawk. This sharp voice, if it could be called a voice, escaped from a parched throat. This outcry was quickly succeeded by a convulsive little cough, like that of a child, but of a peculiar resonance. At this sound Marianina, Filippo, and Mme. de Lanty\* cast their eyes on us like a flash of lightning. The young woman wished herself at the bottom of the Seine. She pressed my arm and dragged me toward a boudoir. Men and women, all the world gave place. Reaching the bottom of the reception-room, we entered a little half-round cabinet. My companion flung herself on a couch, palpitating with terror, and not knowing where she was.

“You are very foolish, madame,” said I.

“But,” she responded, after a moment of silence, during which I gazed on her in admiration; “is this my fault? Why does Madame de Lanty allow such a ghost to wander around in her hôtel?”

“Well,” I responded, “you behave like a simpleton. You seem to take a little old man for a spectre.”

“You tease, you!” she rejoined with that imposing raillery that all women so well know how to assume, when unable to offer any reason for their actions.

“What a pretty boudoir!” she exclaimed, looking about her. “Blue satin always has an admirable effect as a hanging. Is it not cool? Ah! the beautiful painting,” she added, drawing aside an Eastern curtain from the front of a magnificent frame.

For a short time we remained in contemplation of this marvel, which might have been the work of some supernatural pencil.

The picture represented Adonis stretched out on a lion’s skin. The lamp suspended in the middle of the boudoir, encased in an alabaster vase, illumined the draperies with a

\* The Lanty family also appears in “The Deputy for Arcis.”

mild light which enabled us to fully grasp the beauties of the painting.

“Can such a perfect being have ever had existence?” I asked her, after we had examined, in the sweet delight of ecstasy, the exquisite grace of the contours, the pose, color, hair—in fact, the whole of it.

“He is far too beautiful for a man,” she added, after inspecting it the same as she would have done a rival.

Oh! how I, at that time, jealously resented the blow which I persuaded my poetic self had been essayed at my vanity! The jealousy of engravings, of paintings, of statues, where the artist had portrayed exaggerations of human beauty, in consequence of the doctrines which form the gateway to all imaginations.

“That is a portrait,” I replied. “It is due to the genius of Vien. But that great painter has never seen the original; and your admiration will be less lively, perhaps, when you learn that the summer Academy has placed a statue of woman on its highest pinnacle.”

“But who is this?”

I hesitated.

“I wish to know,” she added, quickly.

“I think,” said I, “that this Adonis represents a—a—a relative of Madame de Lanty.”

I could see the anguish to be seen in the bottomless gulf as I contemplated that figure. She sat in silence, myself by her side, the while she squeezed my hand without knowing that she did so! To hell with the portrait! At this moment again resounded, in the silence, the gasping noise of a woman whose frenzy has returned.

Marianina came into the room at this time looking more than ever brilliant by her expression of innocence, her charming grace, and her bright toilette; she walked slowly, and assisted with a motherly care, a filial solicitude, the spectre who was the cause of our flight from the salon where the music was

going on ; as she slowly conducted him she regarded him with a kind of disquietude as he feebly moved his weakly feet. Both had painfully enough reached a door concealed in the hangings. Thereat, Marianina gently knocked. There immediately appeared, as by magic, a big, burly man, something like a familiar genie. After confiding the old man to this mysterious guardian, the beautiful girl respectfully kissed the walking corpse ; and her chaste caress was not exempt from that so gracious wheedling manner which pertains to and is one of woman's greatest privileges.

“*Addio, addio !*” said she with a pretty inflection of her young voice. On the last syllable she executed an adorable trill, in a deep voice, which seemed to depict her heart by its poetic expression. The old man, suddenly overcome by some memory, leaned on the threshold of the secret by-way. By the grace of profound silence we heard the dull, heavy breathing of his chest ; as he stood, he used the better appearing of his sticks of skeleton fingers in feint charges at Marianina's bosom.

The giddy young thing at my side began to laugh as she noted this funny stick-play ; he slipped his glove on one of his fingers and quickly darted toward the salon, whence at this instant came the sound of the prelude to a quadrille.

She saw us.

“Ah ! you are there !” said she, coloring.

After she had scanned us over interrogatively, she hurried to her partner in the dance with the petulant carelessness of her age.

“What was it she wanted to say ?” my young friend asked. “Is she married ? I think I must be dreaming. Where am I ?”

“You,” I replied, “you, madame, sanguine as you are and fully comprehending the most imperceptible emotion, know well how to foster the most delicate sentiments in the heart of man, without bruising it on the first opportunity ;

you who can compassionate the heart's pangs, who have the Parisian's *esprit* joined to a passionate soul, so honored in Italy and Spain——”

She well detected that my language was expressive of bitter irony; and, without even making a pretense of heeding, she interrupted me by saying:

“Oh! I bow to your taste and discernment. A capricious intolerance! You wish me to be different to myself!”

“Oh! as for me, I do not wish anything,” I cried, alarmed at her severe manner. “Is it true that you would like me to relate to you, so you may understand, the history of these raging passions born in the heart by the ravishing women of the South?”

“Eh, well?”

“Yes. Well, then?”

“Well, then,” I said, “to-morrow evening at your house about nine o’clock I will tell you the whole mystery.”

“Not so,” she replied in a petulant manner; “I wish to be told on the spot.”\*

“You have not yet been given the right to make me obey; that will be after you say: ‘I will.’”

“Begin this instant,” she responded, with a desperate coquetry. “I have the most lively desire to learn this secret. I may not listen to you to-morrow——”

She smiled and moved away from me; she became restless and rude and made me seem utterly foolish—as she ever did at such times. She had the audacity of a girl waltzing with a young aide-de-camp, and I was by turns angry, sulky, admiring, loving, jealous.

“To-morrow!” said she, “when it is about two hours from the morning and we shall soon quit the ball.”

“I am not angry,” I thought, “so I will leave her. Thou art more capricious, more fantastic, a thousand times, perhaps, than my imagination.”

\* Sur-le-champ.

The next day we were both seated in front of a good fire, she on a *tête-à-tête* couch, me on a cushion at her feet, and my eyes fixed on hers. The street was silent. The lamps shed a soft light. It was one of the soul's delicious evenings, a moment which one can never forget, one of those hours passed in the ever-desired peace, and of which, later, the charm is a matter for regret, although at the same time our greatest happiness. Who can efface the lively impression of the first enticements of love?

“Go on,” said she, “I am listening.”

“But I dare not begin. This adventure of passion is dangerous to the narrator. If I become too enthusiastic, too free-spoken, you may shut me up—silence me.”

“Speak !”

“I obey.”

“Ernest-Jean Sarrasine was the only son of an attorney in Franche-Comte,” I answered after a pause. “His father had honestly enough gained an income of from six to eight thousand livres, which, of old, was accounted a colossal fortune, even for a patrician.

“The old Maître Sarrasine had allowed nothing to be neglected that might conduce to his son's education. He trusted to see him a magistrate, and he hoped to live long enough to see the little son of Mathieu Sarrasine, the plodding countryman of Saint-Dié, become a noted speaker, to the great glory of the parliament; but heaven denied the attorney this pleasure.

“The young Sarrasine was early placed in the care of the jesuits, and soon gave the promise of making a stir in the parish. His infancy was that of a man of genius. He would study only what he liked, he frequently revolted against his lessons, and sometimes remained for whole hours absorbed in confused meditations; he would look on while his companions played, and, presently, if they were representing Homer's

heroes, he might join therein, when he added extraordinary ardor to the sport.

“If a fight arose between himself and a companion, it was seldom that it ended without some blood being spilt. If he were the weaker, he would bite. By turns active or passive, without aptitude, not too intelligent, his fantastic character was as well known by his masters as his companions.

“In place of learning the elements of the Greek language, he drew the reverend father while he was explaining a passage in Thucydides, sketched the mathematical master, the prefect, servants, and correctors, and smeared every wall with shapeless caricatures. Instead of singing the Lord’s praises in the church, he amused himself at that time by cutting the seats or carving out some saint’s figure. If he had neither wood, stone, nor pencil, he then worked out his ideas with a piece of bread. Whether he copied the personages in the pictures adorning the chancel, or whether it was an improvisation, he always left behind him a quantity of sketches depicting the depraved licentiousness of the younger fathers and their backbiting proclivities, which made the old jesuits smile. To conclude, if we are to place credence in the college history, he was ejected from the school for having, during his attendance at the confessional on Good Friday, carved a grotesque image of Christ out of a log of wood.

“This so awful impiety of the statue could not but bring down condign punishment upon the artist. It was the height of audacity to place on the high altar that so palpably cynical figure! Sarrasine, in spite of threats of the parental malediction, came to Paris. He had a strong will which knew no obstacles; he obeyed the dictates of his mind, and when he arrived entered Bouchardon’s study.

“He worked during the whole journey, and, when evening was come, went to begging his subsistence. Bouchardon, astonished at the skill and intelligence of the young artist, soon guessed under what difficulties his knowledge had been

acquired ; he gave him his assistance ; he caught his affection and treated him like his own child.

“Afterward what time Sarrasine’s genius was apparent, as shown by one of his works which displayed the struggle of the successful genius contrary to the effervescence of his younger efforts, the generous Bouchardon took upon himself the task of attempting to restore him in the good graces of the old attorney. Before the authority of the celebrated sculptor the paternal wrath was appeased. He felicitated himself on, after all, ‘giving the day’ to a great man of the future. While in the first moments of his ecstasy, wherein he had plunged his flattered vanity, the sculptor begged the niggardly practitioner to so establish his son that he might be able to appear to advantage in the world.

“The long and arduous study demanded by sculpture subdued for a time the impetuous character of Sarrasine’s unruly genius. Bouchardon, foreseeing the violence with which his unbridled passions raged in this young soul, perhaps also calling to mind the vigorous temper of Michael Angelo, tried his best to repress his superfluous energy by continuous work. He had the good fortune to keep Sarrasine’s extraordinary vagaries in reasonable bounds ; thus labor became at once the defense and distraction of this divinity student ; sometimes, though, he detected his passionate nature in the fury of conception of some important work, so also when he took unto himself the safety-valve of dissipation. But, notwithstanding his passionate soul, he melted to tenderness and gave his master the great empire of his love, after he had gained for his apprentice the kindly recognition of his parent.

“At the age of two and twenty Sarrasine was compelled to withdraw himself from the salutary influence that Bouchardon exercised on his manners and habits. He succeeded by his genius in winning the prize for sculpture that had been founded, as an encouragement of the arts, by the Marquis de Marigny, the brother of Madame de Pompadour. Diderot

extolled as a masterpiece this statue created by Bouchardon's apprentice. It was not without profound sorrow that the King's sculptor saw depart for Italy this young man, who, by good principles, he had kept in ignorance of the business of life. Sarrasine had for these six years taken his meals at Bouchardon's table. Like Canova, a crank in his art, he arose early in the day, entered his atelier, not leaving it until nightfall, and lived only with his Muse. If he went to the *Comédie-Française*, it was only in the company of his master. He felt constraint in the company of Madame Geoffrin and in the great world, where Bouchardon wished to introduce him, much preferring to be left to himself; beside, he disliked the pleasures of this licentious period. He had no other mistresses than Sculpture and Clotilde, the latter one of the leading celebrities of the opera. Again, this intrigue was not of long duration.

“Sarrasine was very irregular in his private life, and was liable at any time to give way to his ugly disposition; this did not suit the illustrious nymph, who dreaded some catastrophe, so she soon restored the sculptor to his art-love. Sophie Arnould said to me, not knowing how true her words were, that she wondered how his companion had ever been able to overbalance the statues.

“Sarrasine started for Italy in 1758. During the voyage his lively imagination was fired under a heaven of copper, and by the appearance of the marvelous monuments so thickly strewn around in the country of Art's nativity. He admired the statues, the frescoes, the pictures; and, filled with emulation, he came to Rome, a prey to the desire to inscribe his name between those of Michael Angelo and his master, Bouchardon. During the first few days he divided his time between his labors in his work-room and the examination of works of art which abound in Rome.

“He had passed fifteen days—quickly flown—in that state of ecstasy which seizes all young imaginations on contem-

plating the queen of ruins: but one evening he entered the Theatre d'Argentina, in the front of which he found himself impressed in an immense crowd. He inquired the reason of this great throng, and the whole world responded, in two words:

“ ‘Zambinella! Jomelli!’

“ He entered and struggled to the parquet, pressed closely by two remarkably fat *abbati* or priests; but he was fortunately able to get a position hard by the stage.

“ The curtain rose.

“ For the first time in his life he listened to that exquisite music which Monsieur Jean-Jacques Rousseau had so eloquently praised during an evening party at the Baron d'Holbach's. The senses of the young sculptor were, so to speak, ravished by the sublime tone of Jomelli's melody. The natural languorousness of the Italian voice, added to the bridal dress, plunged him into a delicious ecstasy. He remained silent, motionless; he heeded not that the same two priests were still crowding him.

“ Her soul entered his by his ears and eyes. He really believed that he heard by each of his pores. Suddenly the applause broke out in welcome of the entrance on the scene of the prima donna. She advanced coquettishly to the foot-lights and made salutation to the public with an infinite grace. The lights, the enthusiasm of the vast audience, the illusion of the stage, the effect of the handsome toilettes (which at that time were most alluring), all conspired to favor this woman.

“ Sarrasine uttered cries of pleasure. He was struck with admiration of the ideal beauty for which he had vainly sought, the perfection of nature so necessary to a model—who was often base and ignoble—the roundness of a perfect leg, he had found the like of in some others; but she to the former added her white shoulders which ended the neck of a young girl; and the hands of this woman, the polished knees of this

child—this richest, sweetest creation of the antique Greek—had never been met under the cold sky of Paris.

“La Zambinella showed plainly that she lived well and delicately, and the exquisite proportions of feminine nature revealed an ardent desire; to the sculptor these traits were readily apparent, for he is ever a most severe and dispassionate judge.

“She had a most expressive mouth, eyes of love, a complexion of dazzling white. Added to these charms, which would have ravished a painter, she possessed every one of Venus’ marvelous charms, as reverenced and depicted by Greek chisels. The artist could never tire of admiring the inimitable gracefulness with which the arm was attached to the bust, the enchanting roundness of the neck, the harmonious lines described by the eyebrows, the nose, and the perfect oval of the face, the purity of her mobile contours, and the effect produced by the long, drooping eyelashes, which adorned the large and voluptuous eyelids.

“This was more than a woman, it was a *chef-d’œuvre*! He found in this creation an inspiration of love, the rapture of every man; and of dignified loveliness sufficient to satisfy a critic. Sarrasine’s eyes devoured this statue of Pygmalion, which had descended from its pedestal.

“When la Zambinella sang, he was in a delirium. The artist became cold with emotion; then he experienced a focus of feeling sparkling in the inner depths of his being, in that which, for the lack of a better name, we call the heart! He did not applaud, he spake not at all; he gave way to a frantic movement of desire, a frenzy that at this time I can only term terrible and infernal. Sarrasine would have liked to spring upon the stage and seize this woman for his own.

“His strength, intensified a hundredfold by a moral depression impossible to explain, seeing that this phenomenon occurs in a sphere inaccessible to human observation, tended to his project with a painful violence. The onlooker would

have said this man was cold and stupid. Glory, science, the future, laurels, all vanished away.

“‘To be loved of her, or else to die,’ such was the resolution that he formed.

“He was so completely intoxicated that he neither saw the hall, the spectators, the actors, nor heard the music. It had not been well had the space between Zambinella and himself been less; he was possessed; his eyes were glued upon her. An almost diabolical power permitted him to perceive the breath of her voice, of smelling the perfumed powder on her hair, of closing upon her face and there counting the blue veins which traced the satin skin. To conclude, this mobile voice, fresh and of silvery tone, supple as a thread to which the least puff of air will give a shape, which rolls away, and, rolling, returns, develops, and disperses, that voice which displayed the liveliness of her soul, whence it leaves most of the time like one of those cries ejaculated by a convulsive deliciousness but rarely given to the human passions.

“Before long he had to leave the theatre. His trembling legs almost refused to support him. He was broken down, feeble, like a nervous man who is possessed by a frightful rage. He had had his fill of pleasure, perhaps also he had had as much of suffering; his life had now run from him like the water from a vase when overturned by an accident. He experienced a void, an abjection, similar to the weakness of a convalescent who is just emerging from a serious illness. Invaded by a depression of spirits, he sat down on the stone steps of a church. There he rested his back against a pillar and lost himself in a meditation as confusing as a dream. This was the passion he had dreaded.

“As he returned to his lodging he fell into one of those paroxysms of activity which proclaim the presence of a new principle in one’s life. He was a victim to this first fever of love; which thralls so many equally by its sorrows as its pleasures. He would trick his impatience and delirium by

sketching la Zambinella from memory. This was a kind of material meditation. On one sheet la Zambinella was seen in this attitude: in appearance calm and cold, with the affectionate grace of the women of Raphael, le Giorgion, and the other great painters. On another one she was depicted with her head coquettishly turned as she finished a *roulade*, and held in an attitude of listening.

“ Sarrasine sketched his mistress in every position: lying down, standing, on the bed, as both chaste and amorous, accomplished, graceful, all at the dictates of the delirium of his pencils; with all the capricious ideas which excite our imaginations when our thoughts are strongly bent upon a mistress.

“ But his raging thoughts went much further than his drawings. He saw la Zambinella, he addressed her, he supplicated her; he exhausted a thousand years of life and felicity with her; he placed her in every imaginable situation in his attempt, as the saying goes, of passing his future with her. The next day he sent his lackey, to rent for the season, a lodging that should be in her near neighborhood. Then, like all young folk whose souls are strong, he exaggerated the difficulties of his enterprise, and gave as the first food to his passion the felicity of arranging means whereby he might admire his mistress without hinderance. This is the golden age of love, during which we have a proper appreciation of our happiness when alone, and which would not long satisfy Sarrasine. Nevertheless, when he was under the charm of this so fresh hallucination, the effect was more innocent than voluptuous. In a week he lived a whole life; his mornings were occupied in fashioning the clay by the help of which he succeeded in modeling la Zambinella, notwithstanding that she was deprived of the dress, the corsage, and the knots of ribbon. In the evening, alone, comfortably settled in his apartment, lying on his couch, like a Turk under the influence of opium, he was supremely happy and was lavish in his de-

sires. He then began to gradually familiarize himself to his emotions, which had overpowered him when he heard his mistress sing. Afterward he taught his eyes to look upon, and ended by contemplating, her without such an awful burst of senseless, furious passion by which he had been controlled the first day. As his passion became more profound it became, also, more tranquil. For the rest this savage sculptor, not at all troubled by his solitude—for company would have been an annoyance to him—peopled it with images, built of phantoms of hope, and full of happiness. He loved with all the strength of innocence, but he had to undergo those scruples of the innocent by which we are assailed when we love for the first time. He first thought over how it were best to proceed in his intrigue. Where did la Zambinella live? He must learn whether she had a mother, an uncle, a teacher, a family. He dreamed of ways and means by which he could see her, could talk to her; his heart was strongly set upon this idea and ambition, which he put aside until the following day, quite as happy in his physical sufferings as in the pleasures of his intellect."

"But," said Madame de Rochefide, interrupting me, "I don't see where Marianina and the little old man come in."

"You don't see them!" I cried with the impatience of an author when some one is trying to spoil the effect of his climax.

"For some days," I replied, after a pause, "Sarrasine stuck in his apartments. His aspect expressed as much of love as of passion as he thought of the voice of la Zambinella. This adventure would, in Paris, have been the talk of the town if it had become known there; but in Italy, madame, at such a spectacle every one will 'assist in the reckoning,' as the saying goes; there is there an intense interest of the heart, which excludes the espionage of the opera-glass. Nevertheless, the frenzy of the sculptor was not likely to escape the attention of the chorus and ballet for any length of time. One evening

the Frenchman perceived some actors jeering him in the wings. It would be hard to say to what extremity he might not have gone if la Zambinella had not just then appeared on the stage. She flashed an eloquent look from her eyes on Sarrasine ; this was repeated oftener than the women in the cast could wish. This constant surveillance was a revelation. Sarrasine was beloved !

“ ‘ If this is not a passing fancy,’ thought he, as he already accused his mistress of too much ardor ; ‘ she does not comprehend the domination under which she has fallen. I hope her fancy for me will endure as long as my life.’

“ At this moment the artist was aroused by three strokes, lightly rapped on the door of his box. It opened. There entered a mysterious old woman.

“ ‘ Young man,’ said she, ‘ if you would be happy, have prudence. Wrap a cloak about you, pull your large-brimmed hat down over your eyes, then, toward ten o’clock this evening, be you found on the Rue du Corso, in front of the Hôtel d’Espagne.’

“ ‘ I will be there,’ he replied, pressing two louis into the wrinkled hand of the duenna.

“ He made his escape from his box, after giving a sign of intelligence to la Zambinella, who timidly dropped her voluptuous eyelids like a shortly to be happy woman. Then he hastened to go to his lodgings in order that he might borrow of his toilet all the attractions that it could lend him. As he left the theatre an unknown man stopped him by seizing his arm.

“ ‘ Be most careful of yourself, Signor Frenchman,’ he whispered in his ear. ‘ It is a case of life or death. The Cardinal Cicognara is her protector, and that’s no joking matter.’

“ Though a demon stood between Sarrasine and la Zambinella and the depths of hell itself, at this moment he would have crossed all at one stride. Like the horses of the im-

mortals depicted by Homer, the love of the sculptor had leaped, as it were, in the twinkling of an eye over immense space.

“‘Should death attend me as I left the house, I would but go the more quickly,’ he replied.

“‘*Poverino!*’ exclaimed the unknown as he quickly disappeared.

“To speak of danger to a lover, what is this but to give an added pleasure? Never had Sarrasine’s lackey seen his master so particular in arranging his toilet. His most beautiful sword, a present from Bouchardon, the knot of which had been given him by Clotilde, his light suit of clothes, the vest of silver cloth, his gold snuff-box, his valuable watch, all were drawn from his chest and donned; he appeared like a young man who is about to promenade with his first love. At the hour mentioned, intoxicated with love and boiling with impatience, Sarrasine, his nose in his cloak, ran to the trysting-place given by the old woman.

“The duenna awaited him.

“‘You are late!’ said she. ‘Come.’

“She took the Frenchman through a number of small streets, and stopped before a fairly beautiful palace. She knocked; the door was opened. The old woman conducted Sarrasine through a great labyrinth of stairways, galleries, and suites of rooms which were unlighted save for the faint, uncertain light of the moon, and presently arrived at a door, through the fissures of which escaped rays of vivid light, and whence proceeded an uproar of merry voices. Suddenly Sarrasine was dazzled, when, on a word from the old woman, he was admitted into an obscure suite of rooms that was brilliantly lit up and sumptuously furnished, and in the centre of which was a well-laid table, groaning with bottles of ‘sacrosainte,’ cheerful flagons which blushingly sparkled in the light. He recognized the singers and dancers of the theatre in the charming female warriors, all prepared to enter upon

an artists' orgy, and who were awaiting only himself to begin.

“Sarrasine kept of good countenance and sternly repressed a gesture of vexation. He had expected to find a dimly lighted apartment, his mistress seated by an open fire, jealously awaiting his arrival, of love to the death, of confidences exchanged in whispering voices, heart to heart, of perilous kisses, of cheek pressed to cheek, of the hair of la Zambinella caressing his forehead surcharged with desire, glowing with happiness.

“‘Hurrah for Folly,’ was their greeting to him.

“‘*Signori e belle donne*, or gentlemen and fair ladies, you will permit me, I trust, at a later date to take my revenge, and to testify to the hearty manner in which you receive a poor sculptor.’

“After having passed his kindly compliments to the company, the majority of whom he knew by sight, he undertook to approach the easy-chair on which la Zambinella was nonchalantly extended. Oh ! how his heart went pit-a-pat when he perceived a darling little foot, stockinged in one of those slippers, which, if I may so say, madame, in past days, gave to the feet of women a coquettish, if withal voluptuous, expression, which I do not know any men capable of resisting. The white stockings, clocked in a beautiful design of green color, the short petticoats, the slippers with high-pointed toes of the reign of Louis XV., contributed perhaps not a little to the demoralization of Europe and the clergy.”

“A little !” said the marquise. “You cannot have read much ?”

“La Zambinella,” I replied, smiling, “was saucily crossing her legs, agitating him in sport like one who knows she has the upper hand ; she had the attitude of a duchess in her manner and a sort of capricious beauty, full of a certain engaging languor. She had doffed her theatrical habiliments, and wore a pleated bodice which set off her slender shape, and a gown of satin embroidered with blue flowers. Her

bust, partially concealed by a notched edging, dissembled its treasures in a lavish coquetry, and sparkled with its whiteness. Her hair was dressed almost like Madame du Barry's, and, being powdered, suited well her figure, although overshadowed by a large bonnet, which only made it appear more lissome. To see her thus was to adore. She smiled graciously on the sculptor. Sarrasine, unable to speak to her before witnesses, was quite discontent; he politely seated himself near her and intended a speech on music and her marvelous talent; but his voice trembled with love, with awe and hope.

“‘What do you fear?’ said Vitagliani, the most celebrated singer of the company, to him. ‘Come, you have not here a single rival of whom to be afraid?’

“The tenor quietly smiled after this speech. The smile was repeated on the lips of all the roysterers, with a hidden maliciousness which escaped the lover's notice. The publicity of his love was to Sarrasine like the thrust of a dagger suddenly plunged in his heart.

“Although gifted with a certain force of character, he was well aware that he could not entirely overpower the violence of his passion; again, he did not dream that Zambinella was all but a courtesan, and that he could not always have that pure enjoyment of possession which renders the love of a young girl so delightful, and that the consuming passion of an actress might be bought from his hazardous possession. He gave himself up to reflection. Supper was served. Sarrasine and la Zambinella were put without any ceremony beside each other.

“During the first part of the banquet the artists kept some measure of propriety, thus the sculptor was able to converse with the singer. He discovered that she had an intelligent mind; but was wonderfully ignorant, and showed herself weak and superstitious. The delicacy of her organism was reproduced in her intellect. When Vitagliani opened the first bottle of champagne, Sarrasine read in the eyes of his neigh-

bor a startled fear of the little detonation produced by the liberation of the gas. This involuntary start in the feminine organization was interpreted by the artiste's lover as an indication of excessive sensibility. This feebleness charmed the Frenchman. She the more needed the protection of a man's love.

“ ‘ Make use of my strength for your shield.’

“ Is not this phrase written on the foundation of all declarations of love? Sarrasine, too passionately in love to make gallant speeches to the beautiful Italian, was by turns grave, laughing, and reflective. Although he appeared to listen to the merry throng, he did not understand a word that they said; he was too engrossed at finding himself near her, with the light touch of her hand as he served her. He reveled in a secret joy. Despite the eloquence of a few mutually exchanged glances, he was surprised at la Zambinella's air of reserve with him. From the first she began to press his feet and teased him with the malicious roguery of a woman free to love; but, all at once, she was draped in the modest deportment of a young girl, after seeing by Sarrasine's manner that he comprehended her, a trait which unmistakably showed up the violent caprices of her character.

“ When the banquet became an orgy, the guests began to sing, inspired by the liqueurs and the *pedro-Ximenès*. They sang charming duets, airs from Calabre, Spanish stanzas, Neopolitan canzonettes. Intoxication was in every eye, in all the music, in each heart, and in all the voices. They overflowed very soon with an enchanting vivacity, a cordial abandon, an Italian good fellowship which, perhaps, to those understanding, could best be likened to an assembly in Paris, a rout in London, or a function in Vienna. Pleasantries and words of love were bandied about, like bullets in a battle, together with broad jokes, impious sayings and invocations to the Holy Virgin and *al Bambino*. One lay on the couch and went to sleep. One young damsel listened to a declara-

tion without knowing that she was spilling her sherry on the tablecloth. In the midst of all this disorder, la Zambinella remained quiet as if struck with terror. She refused to drink and ate but little ; ‘but,’ said one, ‘to gormandize is a grace among women.’ While admiring the prudence of his mistress, Sarrasine was given up to serious reflections as to the future.

“‘She undoubtedly wishes to be married,’ some one said.

“At this time he had abandoned himself to thinking of the delights of wedded bliss. His whole life had shown him that in the long run this was the only source of happiness ; his soul, to the present time, he had found but cold. Vitagliani, who sat next to him, had applied himself so frequently to the wine that, without being absolutely drunk, he found himself without strength to resist his choler. Sarrasine in a moment of passion had carried this woman to a kind of boudoir which communicated with the salon, and to the door of which he from time to time kept turning his eyes. The Italian was armed with a dagger.

“‘If you come near me,’ said she, ‘I shall be compelled to plunge this dagger in your heart. *Va !* don’t make any mistake about that. I have too great regard for your character for me to give myself up to you in this style. I won’t shrink from sentiment when it suits me ; just now I don’t want it.’

“‘Ah ! ah !’ said Sarrasine, ‘this is a bad way to quench a passion ; it is more like to excite it. If you are already corrupted to this point, woman old of heart, what makes you act like a young courtesan, who whets the emotions of those with whom she trafficks ?’

“‘But to-day is Friday,’ she answered, afraid of the Frenchman’s violence.

“Sarrasine, who was not religious, repressed a smile. La Zambinella bounded up like a young colt and darted into the banquet hall. When Sarrasine appeared, running after her, he

was greeted with a burst of infernal laughter. He saw la Zambinella in a swoon on a couch. She was pale, and seemed exhausted by the extraordinary effort she had made. Although Sarrasine knew but little Italian, he heard his mistress say, in a low voice, to Vitagliani:

“— But he’ll kill me ! ”

“This strange scene put the sculptor in the greatest confusion. At first he stood immovable; presently he recovered his speech, he approached his mistress and made protestation of his respect for her. He found strength in this change in his passion in championing this woman with a more refined discourse; he displayed the treasures of his magic eloquence, as officiously interpreted by many, that women rarely refuse to believe in. At this moment, when the first gleam of the morning light surprised the guests, a woman proposed that they all go to Frascati’s.\* It was received by all with lively acclamations; it was a grand idea to take a trip to the Villa Ludovisi. Vitagliani descended to order carriages. Sarrasine had the happiness of accompanying la Zambinella in a phaeton.

“As they went along the streets of Rome, the gayety, which had been repressed for some time by the fight against drowsiness to which it was delivered, began suddenly to revive. Men and women, all well habituated to this strange life, to this continuous round of pleasure, to this carrying away of the artist who lives a life perpetually *en fête*, and which is the one rite without reservation. The sculptor’s companion was the only one who appeared downcast.

“ ‘Are you ill?’ Sarrasine asked her. ‘Would you prefer to go home?’

“ ‘I am not strong enough to stand so much excess,’ she replied. ‘I have to be careful of myself; but, near you, I feel a sensation of goodness! Without you I should not have remained at the banquet; a night passed in that fashion is injurious to my freshness.’

\* A noted gambling hell.

“‘‘ You are so delicate ! ’ responded Sarrasine, as he contemplated the darling features of this charming and delightful creature.

“‘‘ Orgies are ruinous to the voice.’

“‘‘ Just now, while we are alone by ourselves,’ cried the artist, ‘ and now that you need not fear an ebullition of my passion, tell me that you love me.’

“‘‘ Why ? ’ she replied. ‘ To what good ? I think you are a pretty fellow. But you are a Frenchman, and your sentiment would soon pass away. Oh ! you do not love me as I would be loved.’

“‘‘ How ? ’

“‘‘ Purely—without the end of a vulgar passion. I hate the men perhaps as much again as I hate women. What I need is a sheltering friend. The world is but a desert to me. I am a hateful creature, condemned to conduce to happiness, to the emotions, to the desires, and, like all others, forced to fly whither I am directed. Do not forget, seigneur, that I have not deceived you. I would defend you against my love. Then I would be a friend and ever devoted to you. I have need of a brother, a protector. Be all this to me, but nothing more.’

“‘‘ Not love you ! ’ exclaimed Sarrasine ; ‘ but, dear angel, you are my life, my happiness ! ’

“‘‘ If I was to speak one word, you would recoil with horror.’

“‘‘ Coquette ! nothing can make me afraid. Tell me what you will cost me for the future, when in two months I am so done up that I would be damned to all eternity for one little embrace.’

“ He embraced her in spite of the efforts that la Zambinella made to withdraw herself from his passionate kiss.

“‘‘ Tell me that you are a demon, that you would take my fortune, my name, all my fame ! Do you not want this sculptor ? Speak ! ’

“‘If I were not a woman?’ timidly questioned la Zambinella, in a low, silvery voice.

“‘A good joke!’ exclaimed Sarrasine. ‘Do you think you can deceive the eye of an artist? Have I not these ten days devoured, scrutinized, admired your perfections? Only a woman could have an arm so soft and round, such an elegant figure. Ah! you are fishing for compliments.’

“She smiled sadly, and said, in a low murmur:

“‘Fatal beauty!’

“She raised her eyes to heaven. At this time her aspect had taken on, as it were, such an expression of horror—powerful and livid—that Sarrasine was startled.

“‘Seigneur Frenchman,’ she went on, ‘forget for ever your time of folly. I esteem you; but, as to love, do not ask me for it; that sentiment is stifled in my heart. I have not got a heart!’ she cried, in tears. ‘The stage on which you saw me, the applause, the music, the praise to which I am condemned; there is my life, I have not any other. In a few hours you will not see me with the same eyes, the woman that you love will be dead!’

“The sculptor made no reply. He was the prey of a dumb fury that pressed on his heart. He knew not how to take this extraordinary woman with the brilliant, flaming eyes. This voice marked with feebleness the attitude, the manner, and gestures of la Zambinella; the tokens of sadness, of melancholy, and discouragement, revived in his heart all the wealth of his passion. Every word was a sting. By this time they had arrived at Frascati’s. When the artist offered his arm to assist his mistress to descend from the phæton, he felt all of a shiver.

“‘You would be my death,’ he said to her, noticing her pallor, ‘if I were the innocent cause of your having the least suffering!’

“‘What are you?’

“‘A serpent!’ said she, pointing to a snake which glided

along by the side of the gutter. ‘I am afraid of those odious beasts.’

“Sarrasine crushed in the head of the serpent with a stamp of his foot.

“‘How have you enough courage to do that?’ said la Zambinella, as she looked, in evident fear, at the dead though wriggling reptile.

“‘Eh, well!’ said the artist smiling, ‘dare you really pretend now that you are not a woman?’

“They rejoined their companions and promenaded in the groves of the Ludovisi villa, which at that time belonged to Cardinal Cicognara. The morning sped all too quickly for the amorous sculptor, who was occupied with a multitude of incidents revealing the coquetry, the weakness, the delicacy, of this plastic, non-energetic soul. This was the woman with her sudden fears, her senseless caprices, her instinctive troubles, her causeless audacity, her boastings, and her delightfully ingenuous sentiment. He had an adventure while in the country; the little knot of jolly singers saw in the distance some men armed to the teeth, the costume of whom seemed aught but assuring. At the words: ‘Here are the brigands!’ each doubled their pace to reach the shelter of the walls of the cardinal’s villa. At this critical moment Sarrasine perceived by the pallor of la Zambinella that she had not strength enough to run with the rest; he took her in his arms and carried her, lying, for some time, in a swoon. After he got near a neighboring vineyard, he placed his mistress on the ground.

“‘Explain to me,’ said he, ‘how this extreme weakness, which, in all other women, would disgust and be disagreeable to me, and the least appearance of such would suffice to quench my love for them, pleases and charms me in yourself.

“‘Oh! how I must love you!’ he went on. ‘All your defects, your terrors, your littlenesses all give some added grace to your soul. I know that I hate a strong woman, a Sappho,

brave, full of energy and passion. Oh, frail and gentle creature! How couldst thou be otherwise?

“‘Then,’ said she, ‘you give me no hope. Leave off speaking thus to me, otherwise people will make mockery of you. It is impossible for me to prevent your coming to the theatre; but, if you love me, if you are wise, you will not go there more. Fly, monsieur,’ added she in a solemn voice.

“‘Oh! that’s your lay?’ said the infatuated artist. ‘These obstacles serve to stir up the love in my heart.’

“La Zambinella reclined in a graceful and modest attitude; but she was silent, like one that had a terrible thought portending some evil. When it was necessary to return to Rome, she mounted into a berline with seats for four persons, and ordered the sculptor, in a cruel, imperious manner, to return alone in the phæton. Sarrasine resolved that he would forcibly abduct la Zambinella. All the journey was passed in devising various schemes, each one more extravagant than the other, for that purpose. At nightfall, at the moment when he had started out to inquire of some one the address of the palace occupied by his mistress, he happened upon one of his late comrades on the threshold of his door.

“‘My friend,’ said the latter, ‘I am charged by our ambassador to invite you to spend this evening with him. He is giving a grand concert, and, when you know that la Zambinella will be there——’

“‘Zambinella,’ cried Sarrasine, delirious at this name; ‘I am crazy.’

“‘You are like all the rest of the world,’ replied his comrade.

“‘But if you are my friends, you, Vien, Lauterbourg, and Allegrain; will you lend me your help for a sudden stroke of business after the festival?’ asked Sarrasine.

“‘It is not to kill the cardinal? Not to——?’

“‘No, no,’ said Sarrasine; ‘I only ask you to do what any honest man might do.’

“ In a little while the sculptor had arranged everything for the success of his scheme. He was the last guest to arrive at the ambassador’s, but he went there in a carriage drawn by vigorous and speedy horses, the property of one of the most enterprising *vetturini* of Rome. Society crowded the palace of the ambassador, so that it was not without some difficulty that the sculptor was able to enter without being recognized ; he entered the salon at the time that la Zambinella was singing.

“ ‘ Undoubtedly it must be out of regard to the cardinals, bishops, and abbés who are present,’ said Sarrasine, ‘ that *she* is dressed in male attire, that *she* has her curling hair in a net at the back of her head, and has a sword by her side ? ’

“ ‘ She ! what she ? ’ replied the old nobleman whom Sarrasine had addressed.

“ ‘ La Zambinella.’\*

“ ‘ La Zambinella ! ’ responded this Roman prince. ‘ You mock yourself ! Whence come you ? Are you not aware that women are never allowed on the stage in Rome ? Is it not known to you that female rôles, in the Papal States, are taken by—you know what kind of creatures ? It is I, monsieur, who have made Zambinella’s voice. Me it was who paid the salary of that joker’s singing-master. Eh, well ! he shows so little gratitude for the service I have rendered him that he never turns his feet toward my house. In the meantime, as a fact, he owes to me his entire success.’

“ Prince Chigi would most certainly have been able to speak for some time, but Sarrasine was not listening. A frightful truth was penetrating his mind. He was struck as by the stroke of a thunderbolt. He remained motionless, his eyes fixed on the sham female singer. His burning gaze had a kind of magnetic influence on la Zambinella, for the *musicien* ended by turning her eyes toward Sarrasine, and then his celestial voice faltered. It trembled ! An involuntary murmur escaped the company, as if they were compress-

\* *La* is the feminine article.

ing their lips, at this unforeseen ending ; he seated himself and discontinued the song.

“ Cardinal Cicognara, who had spied out of a corner of his eye the direction of the glance given by his protege, then perceived the Frenchman ; he bent over toward one of his ecclesiastical aides-de-camp, and seemed to be asking the name of the sculptor. When he had obtained the desired reply, he earnestly and attentively studied the artist and gave an order to an abbé, who quickly departed. In the meanwhile, Zambinella, who had arisen, recommenced the exquisite solo which had been so capriciously interrupted ; but the execution was bad, and he refused, in spite of all persuasion, to turn and sing on the other side. This was the first time that he had exercised this capricious tyranny, he who had recently become famous for his talent and his immense fortune, due, said the world, no less to his voice than to his beauty.

“ ‘That is a woman,’ said Sarrasine, in absolute belief. ‘Beneath this there is some secret intrigue. The Cardinal Cicognara is tricking the pope and all the people of Rome !’

“ Soon after the sculptor left the salon, to meet with his friends in their trysting-place in the court of the palace. When Zambinella was assured of Sarrasine’s departure he appeared to become somewhat more tranquil. Toward midnight, after stepping through the salons like a man searching for an enemy, the musician left the assembly. At the moment that he reached the gate of the palace, he was adroitly seized by the men, who gagged him with a handkerchief, and placed him in the carriage hired by Sarrasine.

“ Frozen with horror, Zambinella reclined in a corner without daring to make a movement. Facing him he saw the terrible artist who maintained the silence of death. The journey was short. Zambinella, carried by Sarrasine, presently found himself in a sombre, bare atelier. The singer, who was half-dead, reclined in an armchair, without daring to look at the statue of a woman in which he would have recognized his own

features. He did not utter a word, but his teeth chattered ; he was benumbed with fear. Sarrasine marched about in measured steps. All at once he stopped in front of Zambinella.

“ ‘Tell me the truth,’ he demanded, in a deep, broken voice. ‘Thou art a woman? The Cardinal Cicognara——’

“ Zambinella fell on her knees and responded by lowering her head.

“ ‘Ah! thou art a woman,’ exclaimed the artist in delirium; ‘for surely a——’

“ He did not complete the sentence.

“ ‘No,’ he continued ; ‘he would not be so base.’

“ ‘Ah! do not kill me !’ cried Zambinella, melting into tears. ‘I should not have consented to deceive you ; it was only to please my comrades, who did it for a joke.’

“ ‘Joke !’ answered the sculptor, in a voice raging with the fire of hell. ‘Joke ! Laugh ! Thou hast dared, then, to play with the passion of a man, thee !’

“ ‘Oh ! mercy,’ pleaded Zambinella.

“ ‘I mean to kill you !’ cried Sarrasine, drawing his sword by a violent jerk. ‘But,’ he went on, in cold disdain, ‘in raking thy being with this blade, do I find there a sentiment which will extinguish or satisfy my vengeance? Thou art nothing ! Man or woman, I would kill thee ! but——’

“ Sarrasine made a gesture of disgust which obliged him to turn his head, and this caused him to see the statue.

“ ‘And this is an illusion !’ he cried.

“ Then he turned toward Zambinella:

“ ‘The heart of woman was to me a sanctuary, a country. Have you any sisters who resemble you? No. Eh, well, what matters ! But no, you breathe. You leave life, is not this to give up something that is worse than the death itself? It is not my blood nor my existence that I regret, but the future and my happy heart. Thy weak hand has thrown down my happiness. Can I expect that you will take away

all that she has dried up ? I have become as base as yourself. *Love, to be loved !* These are henceforth empty words to me, the same as to you. Without this I think I am seeing a woman in reality when I see this imaginary woman.'

" He pointed to the statue with a gesture of despair.

" ' I should always have in my memory the recollection of a celestial harpy who had sunk its claws into every one of my sentiments worthy of man, and who has stamped all other women with the seal of imperfection. Monster ! thou less than nothing, who can give life to nothing, thou hast for me unpeopled the earth of all its women.'

" Sarrasine faced the terrified singer. Two great tears started to his dry eyes, rolled down his manly cheeks, and fell to the ground ; two tears of rage, two brilliant, bitter tears.

" ' More of love ! I am dead to every pleasure, to all human emotions.'

" At these words he seized a hammer and dashed it at the statue with incredible strength, but missed his aim. He believed that he had destroyed that monument of his folly. He again took up his sword and brandished it to kill the singer. Zambinella shrieked aloud with piercing cries. At this moment entered three men, and suddenly the sculptor fell, pierced by the thrusts of as many daggers.

" ' In the name of the Cardinal Cicognara ! ' said one of them.

" ' This is a boon worthy of a Christian ! ' answered Sarrasine, as he expired.

" These sombre emissaries had, owing to the uneasiness of Zambinella's protector, been stationed at the gate in a closed carriage, in order that should he be abducted they would be at hand to rescue him."

" But," said Madame de Rochefide, " what connection exists between this history and the little old man that we saw at the Lantys' house ? "

“ Madame, Cardinal Cicognara had made a masterly restoration of the statue of Zambinella, having it done in marble ; it is now in the Albani Museum. It was there that, in 1791, the Lanty family found it again and begged Vien to copy it for them. The picture you saw shows Zambinella at twenty years of age, soon after the beginning of the century ; it has more than once been taken for Girodet’s ‘ Edymion ;’ you recognized it as being of the ‘ Adonis ’ type.”

“ But what about Zambinella ? ”

“ That is none other, madame, than Marianina’s great-uncle. You may now readily conceive the interest that Madame de Lanty has in concealing the source of a fortune which proceeds——”

“ Enough ! ” said she, with an imperious gesture.

For a few moments we remained in the most profound silence.

“ Well ? ” I said.

“ Ah ! ” she exclaimed, arising and walking the chamber in stately steps.

She came and looked at me, and said, in a faltering, husky voice :

“ You have disgusted me with life and its passions, a feeling I shall long retain. By the monster near me, are not all human feelings thus explained as being atrocious deceptions ? Mothers assassinate their children either by their vile conduct or by coldness. Espouse ? we betray them ! Lovers, these we forsake, abandon. Love ! does it exist ? To-morrow I feel that I must learn to abide alone, as though on an inaccessible rock in the midst of the tempests of life. Further, if the future of the Christian is but an illusion, at least it will not destroy one after death. Leave me—alone.”

“ Ah ! ” said I, “ you know how to chastise.”

“ Have I not cause ? ”

“ Yes,” I replied. “ In ending this story, which is well enough known in Italy, I give you a vivid idea of the actual

progress accomplished by civilization. They do not make any more of those abominable creatures there."

"Paris," said she, "is a very hospitable land: it welcomes all, both the fortune honestly acquired and the fortune steeped in blood. Crime and infamy surround us on every side; only virtue is without an altar. But pure souls have a country in the sky! Person now unknown to me! I am proud."

And the marquise turned away, thoughtful.

PARIS, *November, 1830.*



## A PASSION IN THE DESERT

*(Une Passion dans le désert.)*

TRANSLATED BY JNO. RUDD, B.A.

“THE sight was fearful!” she cried, as we quit M. Martin’s menagerie.

She had seen that fearless wild-beast tamer going through his marvelous performance in a cage of hyenas.

“How can it be possible,” she went on, “to so tame those creatures as to be sure of them?”

“It is an enigma to you,” I replied, “yet still it is naturally a fact.”

“Ah!” she exclaimed, her lips quivering incredulously.

“You think, then, that beasts are without feeling?” I asked. “Be assured by me that they are taught by us all of our vices and virtues—those of civilization.”

Amazement was expressed in her look.

“At the time I first saw Monsieur Martin, I, like you, exclaimed my amazement,” I went on. “It happened that I was seated alongside an old soldier, his right leg amputated, who had attracted my notice by his appearance as I went into the show. His face showed the dauntless look of the Napoleonic wars, disfigured as it was with battle’s scars. This old hero, beside, had a frank, jolly style which, wherever I come across it, is always attractive to me. Undoubtedly he was one of those old campaigners who are surprised at nothing, who can make a jest on the last grimaces of a dying comrade, or will bury his friend or rifle his body with gayety; give a challenge to every bullet with composure; make a short shriving for himself or others; and usually, as the rule goes,

fraternizing with the devil. He closely watched the proprietor of the exhibition as he entered the cage, curling his lip, that peculiar sign of contemptuous satire which better informed men assume to signify how superior they are to the dupes. The veteran smiled when I exclaimed at the cool daring of Monsieur Martin, he gave a toss of the head, and, with a knowing grimace, said : 'An old game !'

" 'Old game,' said I, 'what do you mean ? You will greatly oblige me if you can explain the secret of the mysterious power of this man.'

" We came to be acquainted after a while and went to dine at the first café we saw after quitting the menagerie. After a bottle of champagne with our dessert, which burnished up his memory and rendered it very vivid, he narrated a circumstance in his early history which showed very conclusively that he had ample reason to style Monsieur Martin's performance 'an old game.' "

When we arrived at her house she so teased me, and was withal so charming, making me a number of so pretty promises, that I consented to write the yarn narrated by the veteran hero for her behoof. On the morrow I sent her this adventure, which might well be headed : " The French in Egypt."

---

During the expedition to Upper Egypt under General Desaix, a Provençal soldier, who had fallen into the clutches of the Maugrabs, was marched by these marauders, these tireless Arabs, into the deserts lying beyond the cataracts of the Nile.

So as to put a sufficient distance between themselves and the French army, to insure their greater safety, the Maugrabs made forced marches and rested only during the night. They then encamped around a well shaded by palm-trees, under which they had previously concealed a store of provisions. Never dreaming that their prisoner would think of escaping,

they satisfied themselves by merely tying his hands, then lay down to sleep, after having regaled themselves on a few dates and given provender to their horses.

When the courageous Provençal noted that they slept soundly and could no longer watch his movements, he made use of his teeth to steal a scimitar, steadied the blade between his knees, cut through the thongs which bound his hands; in an instant he was free. He at once seized a carbine and a long dirk, then took the precaution of providing himself with a stock of dried dates, a small bag of oats, some powder and bullets, and hung a scimitar around his waist, mounted one of the horses and spurred on in the direction in which he supposed the French army to be. So impatient was he to see a bivouac again that he pressed on the already tired courser at such a speed that its flanks were lacerated with the spurs, and soon the poor animal, utterly exhausted, fell dead, leaving the Frenchman alone in the midst of the desert.

After walking for a long time in the sand, with all the courage and firmness of an escaped convict, the soldier was obliged to stop, as the day had already come to an end. Despite the beauty of an Oriental night, with its exquisite sky, he felt that he could not, though he fain would, continue on his weary way. Fortunately he had come to a small eminence, on the summit of which grew a few palm trees whose verdure shot into the air and could be seen from afar; this had brought hope and consolation to his heart.

His fatigue was so great that he threw himself down on a block of granite, capriciously fashioned by nature into the semblance of a camp-bed, and, without taking any precaution for defense, was soon fast in sleep. He had made the sacrifice of his life. His last waking thought was one of regret. He repented having left the Maugrabins, whose nomad life seemed to smile on him now that he was far from them and from all hope of succor.

He was awakened by the sun, whose pitiless rays fell with

their intensest heat on the granite, and produced a most intolerable sense of torridness—for he had most stupidly placed himself inversely to the shadow cast by the verdant and majestic fronds of the palm-trees. He looked at these solitary monarchs and shuddered—they reminded him of the graceful shafts crowned with waving foliage which characterize the Sarracenic columns in the cathedral of Arles.

But when, after counting the palm-trees, he cast his eyes around him, the most horrible despair took possession of his soul. The dark, forbidding sands of the desert spread farther than sight could reach in every direction, and glittered with a dull lustre like steel struck by light. It was a limitless ocean that he saw. It might have been a sea of ice or a chain of lakes that lay mirrored around him. A fiery vapor carried in streaks formed perpetual heat-waves over this heaving continent. The sky was glowing with an Oriental splendor of insupportable translucence, disappointing, inasmuch as it leaves naught for the imagination to exceed. Heaven, earth, both were on fire.

The silence was awful in its wild, tremendous majesty. Infinitude, immensity, closed in upon the soul from every side. Not a cloud in the sky, not a breath in the air, not a rift on the bosom of the sand, which was ever moving in ever-diminishing wavelets, scarcely disturbing the surface; the horizon fell into space, traced by a slim line of light, definite as the edge of a sabre—like as in summer seas a beam of light just divides the earth from the heaven which meets it.

The Provençal threw his arms around the trunk of one of the palm-trees, as though it were the body of a friend; and there, in the shelter of its slender, straight shadow cast by it upon the granite, he wept. Then sitting down he remained motionless, contemplating with awful dread the implacable scene which Nature stretched out before him. He cried aloud to measure the solitude. His voice, lost in the hollows of the hillocks, sounded in the distance with a faint resonance, but

aroused no echo—the echo was in the soldier's heart. The Provençal was two-and-twenty ; he loaded his carbine.

“Time enough yet,” he muttered to himself, laying on the ground the weapon which alone could give him deliverance.

Looking by turns at the burnished black expanse and the blue immensity of the sky, the soldier dreamed of France—he smelt with delight, in his longing fancy, the gutters of Paris—he remembered the towns through which he had passed, the faces of his fellow-soldiers, the most trivial incidents of his life.

His Southern imagination saw the stones of his dearly loved Provence in the undulating play of the heat which spread in waves over the outspread sheet of the desert. Fearing the dangers of this so cruel mirage, he went down the opposite side of the knoll to that up which he had come on the previous day. How great was his joy when he discerned a natural grotto, formed of immense blocks of granite, the foundation of the rising ground. The remains of a rug showed that this place had at one time been inhabited ; a short distance therefrom were some date-palms, laden with fruit. There arose in his heart that instinct which binds us to life. He now hoped to live long enough to see the passing of some wandering Arabs, who should pass that way ; perhaps, who should say, he might hear the sound of cannon ; for at that time Bonaparte was traversing Egypt.

These thoughts inspired him with new life. The palm-tree near him seemed to bend under its weight of ripe fruit. The Frenchman shook down some of the clusters, and, when he tasted the un hoped-for manna, he felt convinced that the palms had been cultivated by some former inhabitant—the rich and luscious flavor of the fresh meat of the dates were attestations of the care of his unknown predecessor. As like all Provençals, he passed from the gloom of dark despair to an almost insane joy.

He went up again, running, to the top of the hillock, where he devoted the remainder of the day to cutting down one of the sterile palm-trees which, the previous night, had served him as a shelter. A vague memory made him to think of the wild beasts of the desert. He foresaw that they would most likely come to drink at the spring which was visible, bubbling through the sand, at the base of the rock, but lost itself in the desert farther down. He resolved to guard himself against their unwelcome visits to his hermitage by felling a tree which should fall across the entrance.

Despite his diligence and the strength which the dread of being devoured in his sleep lent him, he was unable to cut the palm-tree in pieces during the day, but he was successful in felling it. At eventide the monarch of the desert tumbled down; the noise of its falling resounded far and wide like a moan from Solitude's bosom; the soldier shuddered as though he heard a voice predicting evil.

But like an heir who mourns not his parent's decease, he stripped off from this beautiful tree the arching green fronds, its poetic adornment, and used them in forming his couch on which to rest.

Fatigued by his labors, he soon fell asleep under the red vault of his damp, cool cave.

In the middle of the night his sleep was disturbed by an extraordinary sound. He sat up; the profound silence that reigned around enabled him to distinguish the alternating rhythm of a respiration whose savage energy it was impossible could be that of a human being.

A terrible terror, increased yet more by the silence, the darkness, his racing fancy, froze his heart within him. He felt his hair rise on end, as his eyes, dilated to their utmost, perceived through the gloom two faint amber lights. At first he attributed these lights to the delusion of his vision, but presently the vivid brilliance of the night aided him to gradually distinguish the objects around him in the cave, when

he saw, within the space of two feet of him, a huge animal lying at rest. Was it a lion? Was it a tiger? Was it a crocodile?

The Provençal was not sufficiently well educated to know under what sub-species his enemy should be classed; his fear was but the greater because his ignorance led him to imagine every terror at once. He endured most cruel tortures as he noted every variation of the breathing which was so near him; he dared not make the slightest movement.

An odor, pungent like that of a fox, but more penetrating as it were, more profound, filled the cavern. When the Provençal became sensible of this, his terror reached the climax, for now he could no longer doubt the proximity of a terrible companion, whose royal lair he had utilized as a bivouac.

Presently the reflection of the moon, as it slowly descended to the horizon, lighted up the den, rendering gradually visible the gleaming, resplendent, and spotted skin of a panther.

This lion of Egypt lay asleep curled up like a great dog, the peaceful possessor of a kennel at the door of some sumptuous hotel; its eyes opened for a moment, then closed again; its face was turned toward the Frenchman. A thousand confused thoughts passed through the mind of the tiger's prisoner. Should he, as he at first thought of doing, kill it with a shot from his carbine? But he saw plainly that there was not room enough in which to take proper aim; the muzzle would have extended beyond the animal—the bullet would miss the mark. And what if it were to wake!—this fear kept him motionless and rigid.

He heard the pulsing of his heart beating in the so dread silence and he cursed the too violent pulsations which his surging blood brought on, lest they should awaken from sleep the dreadful creature; that slumber which gave him time to think and plan over his escape.

Twice did he place his hand upon his scimitar, intending to

cut off his enemy's head ; but the difficulty of severing the close-haired skin caused him to renounce this daring attempt. To miss was *certain* death. He preferred the chances of a fair fight, and made up his mind to await the daylight. The dawn did not give him long to wait. It came.

He could now examine the panther at his ease ; its muzzle was smeared with blood.

"It's had a good dinner," he said, without troubling himself to speculate whether the feast might have been of human flesh or not. "It won't be hungry when it wakes."

It was a female. The fur on her belly and thighs was glistening white. Many small spots like velvet formed beautiful bracelets round her paws ; her sinuous tail was also white, ending in black rings. The back of her dress was yellow, like unburnished gold, very lissome and soft, and had the characteristic blotches in the shape of pretty rosettes, which distinguished the panther from every other species *felis*.

This formidable hostess lay tranquilly snoring in an attitude as graceful and easy as that of a cat on the cushions of an ottoman. Her bloody paws, nervous and well armed, were stretched out before her head, which rested on the back of them, while from her muzzle radiated her straight, slender whiskers, like threads of silver.

If he had seen her lying thus, imprisoned in a cage, the Provençal would doubtless have admired the grace of the creature and the vivid contrasts of color which gave her robe an imperial splendor ; but just then his sight was jaundiced by sinister forebodings.

The presence of the panther, even asleep, had the same effect upon him as the magnetic eyes of a snake are said to have on the nightingale.

The soldier's courage oozed away in the presence of this silent danger, though he was a man who gathered courage at the mouths of cannon belching forth shot and shell. And yet a bold thought brought daylight to his soul and sealed

up the source from whence issued the cold sweat which gathered on his brow. Like men driven to bay, who defy death and offer their bodies to the smiter, so he, seeing in this merely a tragic episode, resolved to play his part with honor to the last.

"The day before yesterday," said he, "the Arabs might have killed me."

So considering himself as already dead, he waited bravely, but with anxious curiosity, the awakening of his enemy.

When the sun appeared the panther suddenly opened her eyes; then she stretched out her paws with energy, as if to get rid of cramp. Presently she yawned and showed the frightful armament of her teeth, and the pointed tongue rough as a rasp.

"She is like a dainty woman,"\* thought the Frenchman, seeing her rolling and turning herself about so softly and coquettishly. She licked off the blood from her paws and muzzle, and scratched her head with reiterated grace of movement.

"Good, make your little toilet," said the Frenchman to himself; he recovered his gayety with his courage. "We are presently about to give each other good-morning," and he felt for the short poniard that he had abstracted from the Maugrabs. At this instant the panther turned her head toward him and gazed fixedly at him, without otherwise moving.

The rigidity of her metallic eyes and their insupportable lustre made him shudder. The beast approached him; he looked at her caressingly, staring into those bright eyes in an effort to magnetize her—to soothe her. He let her come quite close to him before stirring; then with a movement both gentle and amorous, as though he were caressing the most beautiful of women, he passed his hand over her whole body, from the head to the tail, scratching the flexible ver-

\* *Petite maîtresse.*

tebræ, which divided the yellow back of the panther. The animal slightly moved her tail voluptuously, and her eyes grew soft and gentle ; and when for the third time the Frenchman had accomplished this interested flattery, she gave vent to those purrings like as cats express their pleasure ; but it issued from a throat so deep, so powerful, that it resounded through the cave like the last chords of an organ rolling along the vaulted roof of a church. The Provençal, seeing the value of his caresses, redoubled them until they completely soothed and lulled this imperious courtesan.

When he felt assured that he had extinguished the ferocity of his capricious companion, whose hunger had so luckily been appeased the day before, he got up to leave the grotto. The panther let him go out, but when he reached the summit of the little knoll she sprang up and bounded after him with the lightness of a sparrow hopping from twig to twig on a tree, and rubbed against his legs, arching her back after the manner of a domestic cat. Then regarding her guest with eyes whose glare had somewhat softened, she gave vent to that wild cry which naturalists compare to the grating of a saw.

“ Madame is exacting,” said the Frenchman, smiling.

He was bold enough to play with her ears ; he stroked her belly and scratched her head good and hard with his nails. He was encouraged with his success, and tickled her skull with the point of his dagger, watching for an opportune moment to kill her, but the hardness of the bone made him tremble, dreading failure.

The sultana of the desert showed herself gracious to her slave ; she lifted her head, stretched out her neck, and betrayed her delight by the tranquillity of her relaxed attitude. It suddenly occurred to the soldier that, to slay this savage princess with one blow, he must stab deep in the throat.

He raised the blade, when the panther, satisfied, no doubt, threw herself gracefully at his feet and glanced up at him with a look in which, despite her natural ferocity, a glimmer of

good-will was apparent. The poor Provençal, thus frustrated for the nonce, ate his dates as he leaned against one of the palm-trees, casting an interrogating glance from time to time across the desert, in quest of some deliverer, and on his terrible companion, watching the chances of her uncertain clemency.

The panther looked at the place where the date-stones fell; and, each time he threw one, she examined the Frenchman with an eye of commercial distrust. However, the examination seemed to be favorable to him, for, when he had eaten his frugal meal, she licked his boots with her powerful, rough tongue, cleaning off the dust which was caked in the wrinkles in a marvelous manner.

“Ah! but how when she is really hungry?” thought the Provençal. In spite of the shudder caused by this thought, his attention was curiously drawn to the symmetrical proportions of the animal, which was certainly one of the most splendid specimens of its race. He began to measure them with his eye. She was three feet in height at the shoulders and four feet in length, not counting her tail; this powerful weapon was nearly three feet long, and rounded like a cudgel. The head, large as that of a lioness, was distinguished by an intelligent, crafty expression. The cold cruelty of the tiger dominated, and yet it bore a vague resemblance to the face of a wanton woman. Indeed, the countenance of this solitary queen had something of the gayety of a Nero in his cups; her thirst for blood was slaked, now she wished for amusement.

The soldier tried if he might walk up and down, the panther left him freedom, contenting herself with following him with her eyes, less like a faithful dog watching his master’s movements with affectionate solicitude, than a huge Angora cat uneasy and suspicious of every movement.

When he looked around he saw, by the spring, the carcase of his horse; the panther had dragged the remains all that distance, and had eaten about two-thirds of it already. The

sight reassured the Frenchman, it made it easy to explain the panther's absence and the forbearance she had shown him while he slept.

This first good-luck emboldened the soldier to think of the future. He conceived the wild idea of continuing on good terms with his companion and to share her home, to try every means to tame her, and endeavoring to turn her good graces to his account.

With these thoughts he returned to her side, and had the unspeakable joy of seeing her wag her tail with an almost imperceptible motion as he approached. He sat down beside her, fearlessly, and they began to play together. He took her paws and muzzle, twisted her ears, rolled her over on her back, and stroked her warm, delicate flanks. She allowed him to do whatever he liked, and, when he began to stroke the fur on her feet, she carefully drew in her ~~murderously~~ savage claws, which were sharp and curved like a Damascus sword.

The Frenchman kept one hand on his poniard, and thought to watch his chance to plunge it into the belly of the too confiding animal; but he was fearful lest he might be strangled in her last convulsive struggles; beside this, he felt in his heart a sort of remorse which bade him respect this hitherto inoffensive creature that had done him no hurt. He seemed to have found a friend in the boundless desert, and, half-unconsciously, his mind reverted to his old sweetheart whom he had, in derision, nicknamed "Mignonne" by way of contrast because she was so furiously jealous; during the whole period of their intercourse he lived in dread of the knife with which she ever threatened him.

This recollection of his youthful days suggested the idea of making the panther answer to this name, now that he began to admire with less fear her graceful swiftness, agility, and softness. Toward the close of the day he had so familiarized himself with his perilous position that he was half in love

with his dangerous situation and its painfulness. At last his companion had grown so far tamed that she had caught the habit of looking up at him whenever he called in a falsetto voice "Mignonne."

At the setting of the sun Mignonne, several times in succession, gave a long, deep, melancholy cry.

"She has been well brought up," thought the light-hearted soldier; "she says her prayers." But this jesting thought only occurred to him when he noticed that his companion still retained her pacific attitude.

"Come, my little blonde, I'll let you go to bed first," he said to her, counting on the activity of his own legs to run away as soon as she was asleep; to reach as great distance as possible, and seek some other shelter for the night.

With the utmost impatience the soldier waited the hour of his flight. When it arrived he started off vigorously in the direction of the Nile; but hardly had he made a quarter of a league in the sand when he heard the panther bounding after him; at intervals giving out that saw-like cry which was more terrible than her leaping gait.

"Ah!" said he, "she's fallen in love with me; she has never met any one before; it is really flattering to be her first love."

So thinking he fell into one of those treacherous quicksands, so menacing to travelers, and from which it is an impossibility to save one's self. Finding himself caught he gave a shriek of alarm. The panther seizing his collar with her teeth, and, springing vigorously backward, drew him as by magic out of the sucking sand.

"Ah, Mignonne!" cried the soldier, enthusiastically kissing her; "we are bound to each other now—for life and death! But no tricks, mind!" and he retraced his steps.

From that time the desert was inhabited for him. It contained a being to whom he could talk and whose ferocity was now lulled into gentleness, although he could not explain to

himself this strange friendship. Anxious as he was to keep awake and on guard, as it were, he gradually succumbed to his excessive fatigue of body and mind; he threw himself on the floor of the cave and slept soundly.

On awakening Mignonne was absent; he climbed the hillock and afar off saw her returning in the long bounds characteristic of those animals, who cannot run owing to the extreme flexibility of the vertebral column.

Mignonne arrived with bloody jaws; she received the wonted caresses, the tribute her slave hastened to pay, and showed by her purring how transported she was. Her eyes, full of languor, rested more kindly on the Provençal than on the previous day, and he addressed her as he would have done a domestic animal.

"Ah! mademoiselle, you're a nice girl, ain't you? Just see now! we like to be petted, don't we? Are you not ashamed of yourself? So you've been eating some Arab or other, eh? well, that doesn't matter. They're animals, the same as you are; but don't take to crunching up a Frenchman, bear that in mind, or I shall not love you any longer."

She played like a dog with its master, allowing herself to be rolled over, knocked about, stroked, and the rest, alternately; at times she would coax him to play by putting her paw upon his knee and making a pretty gesture of solicitation.

Some days passed in this manner. This companionship allowed the Provençal to properly appreciate the sublime beauties of the desert. He had now discovered in the rising and setting of the sun sights utterly unknown to the world. He knew what it was to tremble when over his head he heard the hiss of a bird's wing, which occurred so rarely, or when he saw the clouds changing like many colored travelers melting into each other. In the night-time he studied the effects of the moon upon the ocean of sand, where the simoon made waves swift of movement and rapid in their changes. He

lived the life of the East ; he marveled at its wonderful pomp ; then, after having reveled in the sight of a hurricane over the plain where the madly whirling sands made red, dry mists, and death-bearing clouds, he would welcome the night with joy, for then fell the blissful freshness of the light of the stars, and he listened to imaginary music in the skies.

Thus solitude taught him to unroll the treasures of dreams. He passed long hours in remembering mere nothings—trifles, and comparing his past life with the present.

In the end he grew passionately fond of his panther ; for some sort of affection was a necessity.

Whether it was that his own will powerfully projected had modified that of his companion, or whether, because she had found abundant food in her predatory excursions in the desert, she respected the man's life, he feared no longer for it, for she became so exceedingly tame.

Most of his time he devoted to sleep, but he was compelled to watch like a spider in its web, that the moment of his deliverance might not escape him, in case any should come his way over that line marked by the horizon. His shirt he had sacrificed in the making of a flag, which he attached to the top of a palm-tree from which he had torn the foliage. Taught by necessity, he found the means of keeping it spread out, by fastening twigs and wedges to the corners ; for the fitful breeze might not be blowing at the moment when the passing traveler was looking over the desert.

Nevertheless there were long hours of gloom, when he had abandoned hope ; then he played with his panther. He had come to understand the different inflexions of her voice, the expression of her eyes ; he had studied the capricious patterns of the rosettes that marked her golden robe. Mignonne was not even angry when he took hold of the tuft at the end of her tail to count the black and white rings, those graceful ornaments which glistened in the sun like precious gems. It afforded him pleasure to contemplate the supple, lithe, soft

lines of her lissome form, the whiteness of her belly, the graceful poise of her head. But it was especially when she was playing that he took the greatest pleasure in looking at her. The agility and youthful lightness of her movements were a continual wonder to him. He was amazed at the supple way in which she bounded, crept, and glided, or clung to the trunk of palm-trees, or rolled over, crouching sometimes to the ground and gathering herself together for her mighty spring; how she washed herself and combed down her fur. He noted that however vigorous her spring might be, however slippery the block of granite upon which she landed, she would stop, motionless, at the one word "Mignonne."

One day, under a bright midday sun, a great bird hovered in the sky. The Provençal left his panther to gaze at this new guest; but after pausing for a moment the deserted sultana uttered a deep growl.

"God take me! I do believe that she is jealous," he cried, seeing the rigid look appearing again in the metallic eyes. "The soul of Virginie has passed into her body, that's sure!"

The eagle disappeared in the ether, and the soldier admired her again, recalled by the panther's evident displeasure, her rounded flanks, and the perfect grace of her attitude. She was as pretty as a woman. There was youth and grace in her form. The blonde fur of her robe shaded, with delicate gradations, to the dead-white tones of her furry thighs; the vivid sunshine brought out in its fullness the brilliancy of this living gold and its variegated brown spots with indescribable lustre.

The Provençal and the panther looked at each other with a look pregnant with meaning. She trembled with delight (the coquettish creature) when she felt her friend scratch the strong bones of her skull with his nails. Her eyes glittered like lightning-flashes—then she closed them tightly.

“ She has a soul ! ” cried he, looking at the stillness of this queen of the sands, golden like them, white as their waving light, solitary and burning as themselves.

“ Well,” said she, “ I have read your defense of the beasts, but now tell me the end of this friendship between two beings who seemed to understand each other so thoroughly.”

“ Ah ! there you are ! ” I replied. “ It finished as all great passions end by a misunderstanding. I believe that both sides imagine treachery ; pride prevents an explanation, the rupture comes to pass through obstinacy.”

“ And sometimes on pleasant occasions,” said she, “ a glance, a word, an exclamation is all-sufficient. Well, tell me the end of the story.”

“ That is horribly difficult. But you will understand it the better if I give it you in the words of the old veteran, as he finished the bottle of champagne and exclaimed :

“ ‘ I don’t know how I could have hurt her, but she suddenly turned on me in a fury, seizing my thigh with her sharp teeth, and yet (I thought of this afterward) not cruelly. I imagined that she intended devouring me, and I plunged my poniard in her throat. She rolled over with a cry that rent my soul ; she looked at me in her death-struggle, but without anger. I would have given the whole world—my cross, which I had not yet gained, all, everything—to restore her life to her. It was as if I had assassinated a real human being, a friend. When the soldiers who had seen my flag came to my rescue they found me in tears. Ah ! well, monsieur,’ he resumed, after a momentary pause, eloquent by its silence, ‘ I went through the wars in Germany, Spain, Russia, and France ; I have marched my carcase well-nigh the world over, but I have seen nothing comparable to the desert. Ah ! it is most beautiful ! glorious ! ’

“ ‘ What were your feelings there ? ’ I asked.

“ ‘ They cannot be told, young man. Beside, I do not

always regret my panther, my bouquet of palms. I must, indeed, be sad for that. In the desert, see you, there is all, and there is nothing.'

“ ‘ But wait!—explain that ! ’

“ ‘ Well, then,’ he replied, with an impatient gesture, ‘ God is there, man is not.’ ”

PARIS, 1832.



## THE GIRL WITH GOLDEN EYES

*(La Fille aux yeux d'or).*

TRANSLATED BY JNO. RUDD, B.A.

*To Eugène Delacroix, Painter.*

ONE of the most dreadful spectacles we may run across is the malignant aspect of a certain class of the Parisian populace; a class horrible to behold, pallid, yellow, tawny. Is not Paris a vast meadow incessantly stirred by a storm of whirling diverse interests, its crop of men mowed down by death, at an earlier age than elsewhere; whose faces are distorted, twisted, rent by all the passions of the soul and its desires, the venom of which is begotten in their brain; must they not rather be called masks than faces—lying masks of courage, masks of sorrow, masks of joy, masks of hypocrisy; all emaciated, each one stamped indelibly with the mark of a gasping covetousness? What for? For gold, or for pleasure!

Whatever observations on the Paris mind may be made, it is easily explainable how the cadaverous physiognomy is come by in either of its ages—youth or decay. Its youth is a pallid youth devoid of color, a weakness painted over to appear young. Strangers who are not given to reflection may on their first impressions, most likely, give forth an opinion of dislike for this capital, this great factory of enjoyment, whence, they think to themselves, they will shortly be glad to escape; let them but remain and they will soon assume the same deformed shape as the rest. But few words are needed to depict the always infernally tinted Parisian brand; this is not all pleasantries nor raillery, for Paris in summer may justly take the name of hell. This is a fact. It is all smoke, all scorch, all sparkle, all broil, all flame; one perspires, one is

dull, revives, sparkles, crackles, and dies out. Never life in any country is hotter or more afflicted. All social nature is in a state of fusion, as it were ; after finishing a task, one says : "To another!" So nature says likewise to herself. Like unto nature, society, social nature, busies itself with insects, with the flowers of a day, with trifles, fancies, and, like it, also vomits fire and flame from its everlasting crater. Perhaps, before analyzing the cause of this cast of feature peculiar to each class of this intelligent, hustling people, it might be better to describe the general reason for that particular class who disclose faces with that pale, bluey-brownish appearance, not as individuals but a clan.

All take interest in courage, but the Parisian finishes by not being interested in anything. The lack of a dominant sentiment on each face is due to friction ; it becomes gray, like the plaster of a house upon which is discharged all kinds of dust and smoke. In reality, like the old woman who so long as she can get drunk to-morrow does not care where, so the Parisian remains a child whatever his age may be. He grumbles at everything, he consoles everything, he mocks everything, forgets all, wishes all, tastes of all, clutches all with passion, leaves all with nonchalance : his kings, his coquettes, his glory, his idols, whether they be of bronze or glass ; the same as he throws away his old stockings, his hats, and his fortune. In Paris, each feeling that is unresisted goes in the run of things, and their course can only be changed by a hard tussle, which loosens the passions : there love is a desire and hate is welcomed ; he has no more a real parent than he has a thousand-franc bill ; no other friend than the pawnshop. The abandoned have the door, and become the fruits of the street ; these people are not absolutely useful nor altogether useless ; there is always room for such, in the salon as in the street ; blockheads and rogues, people of spirit or of probity.

Everything is tolerated—the government and the guillotine, religion and the cholera. You are agreeable to all the world ;

you are not wanted there at all. Which, then, rules in this country without morals, without belief, without sentiment, but which, on the other side, embraces all the sentiments, all the beliefs, and all the morals ? Gold or pleasure ! Take these two words as a light and run over this great plaster cage, this swarm of black kennels, and there see the young serpents of agitation, of insurrection, of fermentation ! Look. Examine the arrival of that world which has nothing !

The worker, the proletariat, the man who stirs his feet, his hands, his tongue, his back, his one arm, his five fingers, to live ; eh, well, the former must needs practice economy, it is the first principle of his life ; he overdoes his strength, he harnesses his wife to some machine, he wears out his child by a too close sticking of him at the wheel. The manufacturer, by what secondary thread I know not, nor whom it is that sets him in motion to stir this people who, with their dirty hands, turn and gild porcelain, sew coats and dresses, hammer out iron, carve wood, bend steel, blend together hemp and yarn, imitate flowers, embroider woolen, do hair-dressing, stamp bronze, make crystal wreaths, plait leather and lace, cut copper, paint carriages, trim off the old-young elms, steam cotton, blow glass, cut diamonds, polish metals, transform leaves into marble, highly finish flints, design toilettes, color, whiten, and blacken everything ; well, the little boss is to soon arrive in this world of sweat and will promise a study of patience, an excessive salary, be it in the name of the town's fancy or be it in the name of a monster named Speculation.

Then, these quadrumanes are ever on the alert, they pine, labor, swear, fast, march ; all these weary themselves for gain which fascinates them. Afterward, careless of the future, greedy for enjoyment, relying on their strong right arm as does the painter on his palette ; they sport, great lords of one day and on Monday all their money is in the taverns, which melts down the begettings in the slush of the town ; girdled with the most immodest Venus, incessantly being closed and

unclosed, where they are lost like the sport of fortune which this people periodically becomes, first ferocious in pleasure, then quiet at work. Therefore during five days each performs his assigned part in Paris! He books his movements to a shuffle, he swells, grows lean, pallid, spouts out a thousand schemes for his promotion. Afterward his pleasure, his repose is the weariness following a debauch; brown of skin, black with bruises, sallow with drunkenness or yellow from indigestion, who knows not from one day to another whence shall come his future bread, the week's soup, his wife's clothes, or dresses for the child who is all in rags. These men, under the force of circumstances, born, doubtless, beautiful beings (for all creation is relatively beautiful) are, in their infancy, regiments under the command of Might, under the reign of the hammer, of shears, of the cotton-mill, and become quickly vulcanized. Vulcan, with all his ugliness and his strength, is he not the emblem of this ugly yet strong race, sublime in their mechanical intelligence, patient for the most part, terrible one day in a century, as inflammable as powder and prepared for an incendiary revolution by brandy, and yet so intelligent in thought as not to kindle at a word captiously spoken which signifies naught to them: Gold or Pleasure!

In trying to understand all those who hold out their hands to charity for their legitimate wage, where five francs agree with every genus of Parisian prostitution, and all his money is well or evil-gained, these people count up to three hundred thousand individuals. Only for the taverns would not the government be overthrown every Tuesday in the year? Fortunately, on Tuesday, this people is dull, their pleasure is boxed up, they have not as much as a sou, they return to work, to dry bread, stimulated thereto by a lack of material for procreation, to which they become accustomed. Nevertheless, these people are phenomena of virtue, these real men, these unknown Napoleons, who are the type of their strength and endurance in their highest expression, and resume their social

duties in an existence where thoughts and movements combine less for throwing pleasure to them than for the regulating of their acts of sorrow.

The chances are that this workman has saved, it is equally a chance that he gratifies his fancy, he has been able to cast his eyes into the future, he has met a woman, he has found that he is a father, and, after some years of hardship and privations, he ventures a little traffic in haberdashery and notions, renting a little store. If neither illness nor vice arrest him on his way, if he is prosperous, here is a rough sketch of this normal life.

But first salute this king of the moving Parisian, who holds the submission of time and space. Yes, salute this being composed of saltpetre and gas, who gives the children of France their nights of toil, increasing during the day the number in his service; the renown and pleasure of its citizens. This man solves the problem of sacrificing at the one time to an amiable wife, his household, the "Constitutionnel," his office, the National Guard, the opera, and God; but he does not object to turn into crowns the "Constitutionnel," his office, the opera, the National Guard, his wife, and God. Therefore bow before this indefatigable jack-of-all trades. Ending every day at five o'clock, he flies like a bird along the distance that separates him from his home in the Rue Montmartre. Whether it thunders or blows, rains or snows, he is off to the office of the "Constitutionnel" to attend to the sale of that journal, of which he has charge of the distribution. Indoors and out he vends this political bread with gusto. By nine o'clock he is in the bosom of his household, he retails a joke to his wife, steals a smacking kiss as payment, tastes a cup of coffee, or growls at his children. At a quarter before ten he appears at the mayor's office. There, perched on a chair like a paroquet on his pole, the stoker of the town of Paris, until four o'clock he writes down the deaths and births of the whole of the arrondissement without giving

a tear or grief. The joys and the sorrows of the quarter pass under the nib of his pen, as but lately the spirit of the "Constitutionnel" journeyed on his shoulders. He gives heed to nothing. He is always right in his own eyes, he takes his patriotism as he finds it in the paper, he disputes no one, he hisses or applauds with the rest of the world; he's a bird. At some little trouble in his parish he may, in case it is an important ceremony, leave his work to a supernumerary and go to sing a Requiem in the lectern of the church, of which he is, on Sundays and saints' days, the most distinguished ornament; his voice is most imposing when he energetically twists his big mouth to thunder forth a joyous *Amen*. He is the cantor. Free of his official duties at four o'clock, he proceeds to distribute pleasure and amusements in the precincts of his store, the most famous in the city.

Happy is his wife; he has no time in which to be jealous; he is more the man of action than sentiment. So, from the time he comes to allure the demoiselles of the counter, whose sparkling eyes wheedle their customers; who rejoice in the bosom of finery, fichus, lawns, all fashioned by these makers of clothing, or more especially so before their dinner hour, for he makes a practice of giving a page in the journal to be copied, or to open the door instead of the doorkeeper, to cause some delay. At six o'clock, for the whole of two days, he is faithfully at his post. Unremovable counter-tenor of the chorus, he is found at the opera quite ready to become a soldier, Arab, prisoner, savage, peasant, ghost, the foot of a camel, a lion, demon, genie, slave, a black or white eunuch, always well versed in the play presented; of its sorrows, its pities, its astonishments, to scream out its invariable shrieks, to keep silent, to hunt, to fight, to represent Rome or Egypt; but always, *in petto*, the haberdasher. At midnight he becomes again the good husband, man, and tender father; he glides into the conjugal stream, his imagination is again intent

on the lissome figures of the nymphs of the opera, and makes him turn, to the benefit of conjugal love, the depravities of that world and the round, voluptuous legs of la Taglioni. In fact, if he sleeps, his sleep is lively, and he dispatches his slumber like he dispatches his life. Is it not this incessant motion that makes the man, distance incarnate, the Proteus of civilization? This man embraces everything: history, literature, politics, government, religion, militarism, art. Is he not a living encyclopædia, a grotesque Atlas, incessantly on the march, like Paris, which knows not repose? To him everything is legs. No physiognomy can be kept pure in all this toil. Perhaps the worker, who dies an old man at thirty years of age, his stomach tanned by his successive doses of brandy, has been able to find, to speak of him as some philosophers speak of an income, no more happiness than when he was a haberdasher. But perhaps, on the other hand, he has made a successful stroke. Of his eight trades, of his shoulders, his throat, his hands, of his wife and his business, he retires from the latter. Many go on farms, with their children and some thousand francs, and there find the more laborious pleasure which always recreates the heart of man. This fortune and these children, or the children who remain to him from the prey of the superior world, he takes into his gate with his crowns and his daughter, the while his son is being educated at college, who, obtaining more education than had ever been his father's, casts ambitious looks on a higher sphere. Very frequently the youngster of a little trader will become of some object in the State.

This ambition brings us to the thoughts on the second of the Parisian spheres. Whether he has climbed up a story and gone into the entresol, or has descended from the garret and stops on the fourth floor, he at length penetrates into the world somehow; the result is the same. The wholesale merchants and their boys, their employés, the people of the young bank and of great honesty, the dishonest, the lost souls, the

first and the last salesmen, clerks of the bailiff, the lawyer, the notary, in fact, all the assistant members, thinkers, speculators of the lower middle-class who triturate the doings of Paris and watch over its gains, monopolize its commodities, control the products manufactured by the working-people, barrel up the fruits of the South, the fish of the sea, the wines of all bank-sides loved by the son; who spread their hands over the Orient, and scornfully take the shawls of the Turks and Russians; they reap the crops of the far-off Indies, which, as they sleep, are brought to their mart; look after their profits, count their stock, alter and increase their prices; they pack up the whole of Paris in detail, the carriage, the games of children, spy out the caprices and vices of ripe age, and wring out their maladies; well, without drinking brandy like the workman does, are they not flung to the vultures outside the barriers, all the time going beyond their strength—going further than the weight of their body permits, and their morals in addition; their desires dried up, their fast pace abated. At home, the physical tension caused by the lash of interest, under the flail of ambition which torments the world, raises in this monstrous city, the same as the workman is forced under the cruel weight of material elaborations by his incessant desires and the despotism of the “I WILL” aristocrat. There the same, obedient to the same universal master, pleasure or gold, he must devour time, is pressed for time, finding more than twenty-four hours in the day and night, he is unnerved, is killed, sells thirty years of old age for two years of sickly repose. The only difference—the workman dies in a hospital, when his last stunted term is done, while the bourgeois persists to breathe and live, but is cretinish.

You have encountered the drawn face, flat, old, without light in the eyes, without firmness on the feet, dragging on the boulevard, with a dull, expressionless air, the ceinture of his Venus, of his cherished town. What do the bourgeois want? The steel of the National Guard, an immutable *pot-au-feu*, a

decent place in Père-Lachaise cemetery, and, for their old age, a little gold legitimately earned. His Monday, to him, is Sunday; his rest is the promenade of a carriage in the coach-house; his champagne supper depends on how his wife and children joyfully swallow the coal-dust where they roast in the sun; the barrier is his restaurant in which he finds the venomous dinner of so wide renown, or some family ball in which he stifles until midnight.

Some simpletons are as much astonished as Saint-Guy when they are shown the animalculæ that a microscope makes visible in a drop of water, but yet say that the Gargantua of Rabelais, the type of an incomprehensible, sublime audacity, how this giant, fallen from a celestial sphere, amuses himself in contemplating the doings of this second Parisian life, you know the formula, eh? Have you seen their little barracks, cold even in summer, without any other fireplace than an earthen foot-warmer in winter, placed under the vast dome of copper that covers the corn-market. "Madame is there in the early morning, she is the factotum of the Market and gains by her trade twelve thousand francs per annum," says one. Monsieur, when madame has left, passes into a little, dark office ready at hand, where he loans by the *little week* to the traders of that quarter. At nine o'clock he is found at the Bureau of Passports, where he is one of the second-clerks. That evening he is in a box at the Theatre-Italiens, or some other theatre which he chooses for his pleasure. His children are put out to nurse, and afterward to college or in a boarding-school. Monsieur and madame dwell on a third-floor flat, they don't keep a cook, giving their balls in a salon twelve feet by eight, and lighted with an argand lamp; but they give one hundred and fifty thousand francs to their daughter, and rest themselves, at fifty years of age, by taking in the opera, going in a carriage to Longchamp in a faded toilette; in every sunshiny hour they promenade the boulevards or climb the steps of the fortifications. Respected in the quarter, a friend

of the government, allied to the higher middle-classes, monsieur, at sixty-five, obtains the cross of the Legion of Honor, and the father of his father-in-law, the mayor of the arrondissement, is invited to his soirées.

All his work in this life is done to the profit of his children, whom this bourgeoisie fatally endeavors to raise to a higher social rank. Each sphere still throws its spawn into a superior one. The son of a rich grocer is made a notary, the son of a lumber merchant becomes a lawyer. Not one tooth of them all but wants to bite out a new furrow, all stimulate the ascending movement by the use of money.

We have now drawn a third circle in this hell, which perhaps, some day, will have its Dante. In this third social circle, a species of Parisian stomach in which are digested the interests of this city, and where it is there condensed under the form called "affairs," stirred and agitated, a sharp and rancorous intestinal movement of the crowd of lawyers, doctors, notaries, barristers, agents, bankers, wholesale merchants, speculators, judges. We meet still more of the causes of the destruction, physical and moral, everywhere we go.

This living people, almost all, in the infected studios, in the stiff audience halls, in the little railed-off offices, pass the day bent under the weight of business, rising at the break of day to be in time, not to allow any one to rob him, to gain all or not to lose, to seize a man or his money, to make or unmake a bargain, to take advantage of a furtive opportunity, to hang or acquit a man. This reacts on their horses, which become broken-down, overdriven, aged, like themselves, long before their time. Time is their tyrant; when they need it, it is flown away; they cannot expand it or control it. Some soul remains great, pure, moral, generous, and, consequently, some face dwells beautiful in the depraving exercise of a trade by which he is compelled to support his portion of the public miseries; does he analyze, ponder, estimate the proper rule and model?

Where does this people dispose of their heart? I don't know; but they leave some portion, when they have one, before they go down every morning, in the depths of the poignant pains of their families. As for them, the point of the mystery, they see the hell of that society of which they are the confessors, and which they scorn. Now, what has made them besmear themselves with that corruption at which they are horrified and sorrowful for? whence by lassitude and some secret transaction they marry; indeed, it is necessary for them, they are so vitiated in all their feelings, they are so far from men and their institutions, from the source of which they fly like the bloom on cadavers while they are still warm. At every hour the man of money hangs on to life; the man of wedding-contracts hangs on death; the man of law hangs his conscience. Compelled to speak without cessation, ever replacing the idea by the word, the sentiment by the phrase, their soul becomes a larynx. They use it to demoralize.

Neither the great merchant, nor the judge, nor the barrister can preserve their right senses: they no longer possess them; they only apply to everything their own rules, which are essentially false. Carried away by the torrent of their life, they possess neither brides, fathers, nor lovers; they slide like a sled on the snows of existence, and, every hour they live, are jostled by the business of this great city. When they return to their homes they are under requisition to attend a ball, the opera, or some festival, or, possibly, they have an engagement with some client whom by their knowledge they can protect. To this terrible expenditure of intellectual force they oppose no genuine relaxation, save such as are insipid and afford no real contrast, such as a debauch or a frightful, secret dissipation; for they dread the scandal of the world and dare not affront society. Their immoderate eating, playing, watching, bloat their faces, which become flat and coppery in color. Their actual dullness of comprehension is hidden under a special science. They know their trade, but are ignorant of all else; then, to

save appearances, they put it out of the question, criticising it as wrong and irregular ; in appearance doubters, but in reality simpletons, wearing their spirits by interminable discussions. Almost every one adopts convenient social prejudices, for each is of the same opinion in dispensing with all things literary and political, the same as they place their consciences under the shelter of the Code or the Tribunal of Commerce.

Partly by the good-luck of being remarkable men, those who have deviated from the mediocrities crawl to the top of the tree. Their faces are of a pale and vinegary aspect, with an unnatural coloring ; their eyes are tarnished and in deep circles ; their loquacious, sensual mouths, in which the observer recognizes the debasement of their thoughts and the rotation in the circle of a specialty which kills off all the generative faculties of the brain, the boon of seeing afar, of generalizing and deducing. They are nearly all shriveled in the furnace of their business. But there is not a man lashed to or caught in the hopper or cog-wheels of these immense machines that fears he will not become great.

If he is a doctor or has a smattering of medicine, or he has made some cure, he is a Bichat who dies young. If a great merchant, he neglects some business, he is nearly a Jacques Cœur. Who but execrated Robespierre? Danton was his slothful follower. Who is there, though, but has envied the faces of Danton and Robespierre, some for their sublimity, others for their power? So, likewise, the ambition of the workman is that of the middle-classes. In Paris vanity includes every passion. The type of this class is seen in the ambitious bourgeois, who, after a life of worry and continuous scheming, passes on to the Council of State, like ants file through a fissure ; some being editors of newspapers, profligate in schemes, that the King may make them peers of France, perhaps to avenge themselves on the nobility ; some being notaries become mayors of their arrondissement ; every one flattered by their business and who, when they arrive at their goal,

arrive *killed*. In France custom enthroned the wig. Napoleon, Louis XIV., the great kings, are only the leaders of the young people to fill out their designs.

Above this sphere is the world of art. But there, again, the visages marked with the seal of originality are nobly bowed, but broken, fatigued, sinuous. Wearied by a desire to create, exceeding their expensive whims, fatigued by a devouring genius, famished for the lack of pleasure, the artists of Paris risk all to win back by excessive toil the omissions left by their slothfulness; they vainly search to conciliate the world and glory, money and art. In commencing, the artist does not pant under the creditor; but his needs bring forth debts, and his debts demand his nights. After toil, pleasure. The comedian plays up to midnight, studying all the morning, repeating his lines at noon; the sculptor lies prone under his statue: the journalist is a thought on march, like a soldier in war; the painter who is the fashion is overwhelmed with work; the painter without connection has his heart gnawed if he is a man of genius. His competitors, rivals, calumniators assassinate his talent. Some, desperate, rush into the abyss of vice; others, young and ignorant, too quickly discount their future. Few of these faces, originally sublime, retain their nobility. Some few, though, retain the radiant beauty of their head without debasement. The face of an artist is always anomalous, it is ever above or beneath conventional lines, for this is what idiots term this ideal beauty. What power of destruction. What passion. All passion in Paris blends in two terms: gold and pleasure.

Now, why don't you respire? Is it that you feel there is not space enough for the air to be purified? Here is neither labor nor pains. By whirling up the spiral stairs gold has gained the summit. Out of the depths of the sighs where their gutter begins; out of the depths of the work-shops in which stay the wretched bastards; in the heart of the counting-rooms, behind the gratings of iron-rails, gold, without

figuring on marriage-portions or inheritances, is grasped by the hands of young girls or the bony hands of old men, gushing out toward the aristocratic folk, where it glitters, displays itself, and streams away.

But before quitting for the four quarters to which pertain Parisian high propriety, who desire it not, after the causes spoken of; deducing the physical reasons, and after taking an observation of the plague, leaving, so to speak, in abeyance those who constantly show by their faces the janitor, the store-keeper, or the workingman; plainly speaking of a deleterious influence whose corruption nearly equals that of the Paris administration which complacently permits it to exist.

If the atmosphere of the houses in which live the greater part of the middle-class is infected, so the atmosphere of the streets spews out cruel miasmas into the back-shops where the air is rarified; who are these that leave this pestilence in the forty thousand houses of this great city, that bathes its feet in the filth, that can really think that it is desired seriously to inclose in walls of concrete, which are alone able to prevent the most fetid mire from filtering through the soil, of there poisoning the wells and of continuing underground to Lethe, its famous name? Half of Paris sleep in the putrid exhalations of courts, of low, close streets.

But now to the great salons, airy and light; the mansions with gardens; high society, idle, happy, rich. There the faces are emaciated and gnawed by vanity. There, nothing is genuine. They seek pleasure; do they not find weariness? People of the world founder very early in life. They have no other occupation than to manufacture enjoyment; they very speedily destroy their senses by this, the same as the workman destroys his by brandy. Pleasure is like certain medical substances; to constantly obtain the same effect it becomes necessary to double the dose, and death or stupidity is the final doom. All the lower classes sprawl before the wealthy and spy out their tastes so that they may imitate their

vices and exploits. How can one resist the constant seductions that are woven in this country? So Paris has its *theriakis*,\* for which it plays ; and gluttony or courtesans are its opium. So you see to this people happiness is a question of taste and not a passion ; it is a romantic fantasy of chilly love. There impotence reigns ; there most of their ideas are as listless as the energies of the affectations of the boudoir are feminine make-believes.

There are beardless boys of forty, there are old doctors of sixteen. The wealthy of Paris take their intelligence ready made, their science all masticated, every opinion as formulated ; they dispense with real science, spirit, and opinion. In the world their unrighteousness is equal to their feebleness and to their libertinism. They become miserly of the time as they lose their strength.

They cannot find as many affections as ideas. Their greetings are covered in a profound indifference, and their politeness is continuous scorn. They never love others. By their witless sallies, their countless indiscretions, by their gossip, by all these they consider themselves above the commonalty : for of such depth is their language. But these unfortunate "happy" ones pretend not to know that they resemble in speech and manner the truths taken from la Rochefoucauld's works ; as if such a thing could not exist in their midst, in this nineteenth century, as a junction of the ever-full and an absolute void. Should some man use a pleasantry that is bright and witty, it is incomprehensible ; they soon fatigue with giving without receiving, they stay at home and are content to remain in the kingdom of fools for their possession.

This hollow life, this continual waiting for pleasure that never arrives, this chronic weariness, this inanity of the spirit, the heart, and the brain, this lassitude of the great Parisian assemblies, reproducing time and again all these traits, making their cardboard faces, their premature wrinkles, this physiog-

\* A medicinal herb, mentioned by Bacon.

nomy of wealth or the grin of impotence, is the reflection of the gold, or the flown intelligence.

This view of Paris morals proves that the physical Paris cannot be other than it is. This city which wears the diadem of queen, always majestic, is envied furiously and irresistibly. Paris is the head of the whole world, a brain which craves genius and guides human civilization ; a great man, an artist incessantly creating, or, on further thoughts, a politician who must necessarily have wrinkles in his brain ; here are the vices of the great man, the fantasies of the artist, and the criticisms of the politician. His physiognomy undergoes a germination of good and of evil, the combat and the victory ; the moral war of eighty-nine, whose trumpet sound still reëchoes in every corner of the world ; and likewise the troubles of 1814. That city cannot become more moral, nor more cordial, nor more correct unless copper-bound, like those fireworks whose gushing waves you so admire. Is not Paris a noble vessel loaded with intellect ? Yes, her arms sometimes are oracles that permit fatalities. THE CITY OF PARIS has a tall mast, all of bronze, sculptured with victories, and has for its lookout man Napoleon. That shipwreck sent her pitching and rolling ; but she still ploughs the world, she makes fire in the hundred rings around her tribunes, she still labors in the seas of science, she bides her time, and cries aloud from the mast-head by the voice of her savants and artists : “ Forward, march ! follow me ! ”

She carries an immense array of new streamers which she has made to dress the ship. There are ship-boys and urchins laughing in the shrouds ; heavy bourgeoisie form the ballast ; workmen and sailors pay out the tar ; in her state-rooms the happy passengers ; elegant midshipmen smoke their cigars as they lean against the rail ; on deck her soldiers, recruits or veterans, who vault aboard at every port, and, all willing to give their lives, asking glory what is pleasure ; or of lovers, why wish for gold.

Therefore the excessive action of the proletariat, the depravity of interests which bruise the two classes of bourgeoisies, the hardships of the artists of genius, and the incessant excess of pleasure sought after by the great, explain the normal deformity of the Parisian countenance.

The Orientals only, of the whole human race, offer a magnificent portrait; but it is the effect of constant calmness caused by those profound philosophies over a long pipe, cross-legged, a twisted turban on head, which contemplates every movement with horror; while those of Paris, stunted (big and little), run, leap, and caper, scourged by an unpitying goddess, Necessity: the necessity of money, glory, and amusement. So, some fresh face, reposed, gracious, really young, is a most extraordinary exception: it is but rarely met with.

If you see one, be assured that it belongs to: a young, fervent priest or to some good, octogenarian abbé, with a triple chin; to some young person of pure nature, as is sometimes raised in certain bourgeois families; to a mother of twenty, still full of illusions, as she suckles her first-born; to a young man freshly arrived from the provinces, confided to a devoted dowager who is left without a sou; or to some shop-boy, who goes to bed at midnight, thoroughly tired out with wrapping up or unwrapping calico, and who rises at seven to clean out the store; or, frequently, to a scientific man or a poetical one, who lives a sober life, quiet and chaste; or to some simpleton, satisfied with himself, nourished by his own foolishness, guzzling health, always occupied in smiling to himself; or to the happy and equable lounger species, the only really happy people in Paris, and who taste each hour the newest poetries.

However, there is in Paris one privileged class of beings who profit by this incessant motion of manufacturing interests, business, or the arts, and of gold. These beings are the women. While some even of these have a thousand secret causes, more here than elsewhere, which shall destroy their

faces, still he encounters in the feminine world a little, happy tribe which lives the life of the Orientals, and these preserve their beauty; but these women are rarely seen afoot in the streets, they live concealed, like those rare plants which display their lovely petals only at certain hours, and constitute veritable exotic exceptions. Still, Paris is essentially the country of contrasts. If noble sentiments are rare there, they may yet be met with, together with boundless devotion. On this battlefield of interests and passions, in the midst of society marching along in the triumph of egoism, where each is compelled to defend himself alone, and whom we call to arms, it seems most pleasant when it is encountered and becomes sublime by its juxtaposition.

So of faces. In Paris, at times, in the higher aristocracy we find some trace of the same ravishingly clear faces, the fruits of exceptional education and environments. The youthful beauty of English blood thoroughly blended in Southern features and united to French intelligence and purity of form. The fire of their eyes, the delicious redness of their lips, the black lustre of their fine hair, a white skin, a distinguished cast to the face, render them the beautiful flowers of humanity, sublime when seen in contrast with the mass of other physiognomies—wan, drawn, weazened, crooked, grinning. So women immediately express their admiration of these young people with that greedy pleasure which makes men turn to look at a pretty person; becoming, gracious, embellished with all the virginities which our imaginations can wish to decorate the perfect girl.

If this rapid glance over the population of Paris has caused you to realize the rarity of a Raphaelistic face, and the passionate admiration that the first sight of one incites, the principal interest of our story will be fully justified. *Quod erat demonstrandum*, this is what is demonstrated, if it be allowed to apply scholastic formulæ to the science of manners.

Now, on one of those lovely mornings in spring, when the

leaves are not yet green, although unfolded, when the sun begins to lighten up the roofs and when the sky is blue, when the populace of Paris come out of their shells, come buzzing on to the boulevards, gliding along like a serpent of a thousand colors, by the Rue de la Paix toward the Tuileries, saluting the splendors of wedlock which has recommenced its campaign ; on one of these delightful days, then, a young man, as handsome as the day, this very day, dressed with taste, easy in manner, spoken of in secret as a love-child, the natural son of Lord Dudley and the famous Marquise de Vordac, was promenading the Broad Walk in the Tuileries.

This Adonis, named Henri de Marsay, brought to France, whither Lord Dudley came to marry that young person, already the mother of Henri, to an old gentleman named M. de Marsay. This coxcomb, colorless and almost quenched, recognized the child as his own by receiving the usufruct in an interest of one hundred thousand francs ; definitely describing him as his putative son ; a folly which did not cost much to Lord Dudley, the French Funds being then valued at seventeen francs fifty centimes.

The old gentleman died without having known his wife. Mme. de Marsay afterward married the Marquis de Vordac ; but, before she became marquise, she was rather uneasy about her and Lord Dudley's son. Just then war was declared between France and England, which separated the two lovers, and her faithfulness, "ever the same," was not nor ever will be in the style in Paris.

Then the successes of an elegant woman, pretty, universally admired, dulled in the Parisian all maternal feeling. Lord Dudley was not more careful of his offspring than was his mother. The quick infidelity of the young, ardent girl he loved had, perhaps, given a sort of aversion to everything connected with her life. It may perhaps be thought that fathers do not love their children to whom they give an ample acknowledgment ; now social belief is of the utmost importance for the repose of

families, that is why all bachelors hold the one opinion that the paternal is a sentiment far higher than that grown in the hot-house of woman, and is shown by both custom and law.

Poor Henri de Marsay had never met his father now in heaven, that one of the two to whom he was not under obligations for his creation. The paternity of M. de Marsay was naturally very incomplete. These children are not, in the natural course of things, the children of a father who is concerned for only a few passing moments ; and that gentleman did but imitate nature. The good man had not sold his name to be deprived of his game. He ate without compunction of the free lunches provided at the gaming-houses, and aimed at using as little as possible of what was paid him each six months by the National Treasury.

He had raised the child of an elder sister, a Demoiselle de Marsay, and gave him, from the meagre pension allowed him by his brother, a preceptor, an abbé without money or marbles, who measured out the future of the young man ; and he resolved to pay him out of the hundred thousand livres of income for the care given to his pupil, to whom he had given his affection.

This preceptor he found by chance to be a true priest, one of those ecclesiastics cut out by nature for a cardinal in France, or a Borgia under the tiara. He taught the child three years and then placed him in college for ten years. Then this noble man, named the Abbé de Maronis, finished the education of his pupil by teaching him of civilization in its every phase. He nurtured him on his own experience ; he drew him but little toward the church, then in a ferment ; he sometimes took him through the slums, more frequently to see the courtesans ; he pulled human sentiment apart piece by piece ; he roasted the politics of the day in its very citadel of the salon ; he sized up the government machinery, and, tempted by friendship for a noble nature which had been forsaken, endeavored to replace him in the affections of his

mother. "The church, is it not the mother of orphans?" answered the pupil of his cares.

This worthy man died a bishop in 1812; he had the profound gratification of leaving behind him under the heavens a child whose heart and spirit at sixteen could overthrow a man of forty. Who would expect to meet a heart of bronze, an alcoholic brain, under the most seducing figures of the old painters, those natural artists, who always painted a serpent in the terrestrial paradise? Still, this is nothing.

More, this good devil of a Violet had given his child a certain predilection in the knowledge of high society in Paris which can as speedily dissipate as produce, in the hands of a young man, another hundred thousand livres of income.

To conclude, this priest, wicked but politic, incredulous but wise, perfidious but amiable, feeble in appearance, but as vigorous in body as mind, was really so useful to his pupil, so complaisant to his vices, so good a calculator of all his special powers, so deep when he came to gauge humanity, so young when at table, at Frascati's, at—— you know where, that he recognized Henri de Marsay as being so little changed, in 1814, that, seeing the picture of his dear bishop, the only thing that he had been able to bequeath him, this prelate, an excellent type of men, whose genius had saved the Catholic church, Apostolic, and Roman, momentarily compromised by the weakness of its recruits and the senility of its pontiffs; but he wanted the church!

The continental war prevented young de Marsay knowing his real father, of whom it was doubtful whether he knew his name. Naturally he had little regret for his putative father. When Mademoiselle de Marsay, his only mother, had been taken to the cemetery of Pére-Lachaise, where she was buried under a very pretty little tombstone, Monseigneur de Maronis had promised to this coxcomb of a widow one of the best places in heaven, insomuch that, seeing the happiness of death, Henri abandoned tears that were egotistical and did a little

weeping for himself. When the abbé saw this sorrow he dried the tears of his ward, bidding him observe that the good girl took plenty of fine snuff, and had become so ugly, so deaf, so irritable, that he ought to be thankful for her death. The bishop had emancipated his pupil in 1811. Then, when the mother of M. de Marsay remarried, the priest chose, in the family council, one of those honest, headless tetrarchs, whom he constrained through the confessional, and charged him to become the administrator of the fortune and apply the revenues thereof to the needs of the youngster, but he wished him to preserve the capital intact.

Toward the close of 1814, Henri de Marsay, not having anywhere on earth a sense of obligation to any one, had the same freedom as a bird without companions. When he was twenty-two he would have passed for seventeen. Generally, his hardest rivals looked upon him as the prettiest boy in Paris.

From his father, Lord Dudley, he had taken those loving, deceitful blue eyes; from his mother, his black curly hair; from both, a pure blood, a skin like that of a young girl, a sweet and modest manner, a fine aristocratic waist, and particularly beautiful hands. For a woman to see him was to bring upon her a fit of lunacy; do you understand? Well, conceive one of those desires that gnaw the heart, but don't forget the fact of the impossibility of its being gratified, because the woman of Paris is generally without tenacity. Between themselves they say, after the manner of men, the motto of the house of Orange: *JE MAIN TIEN DRAI*.

Under this freshness of life, and in spite of the limpid water of his eyes, Henri had the courage of a lion, the cunning of a monkey. He could cut through a bullet on the edge of a knife at ten paces distance; he rode a horse in a manner which seemed to realize the fable of the centaur; he could drive a carriage with all the grace of a great whip; he was as lively as a cherubin and as quiet as a sheep; but he

could beat any man in the faubourg by the terrible play of his feet or his cudgel ; then he could finger the piano, equaling in skill the best artists when he felt in the humor ; and possessed a voice of such value that Barbaja would have earned at least fifty thousand francs each season by it. Alas ! all these brilliant qualities, these pretty defects, were tarnished by a dreadful vice : he believed in neither men nor women, nor in God or the devil. Capricious nature had begun this character, a priest had completed it.

So as to make this adventure understood, it is necessary to add here that Lord Dudley naturally found plenty of women anxious to have some examples and copies of this delicious portrait. His second *chef-d'œuvre* of this kind was a young girl named Euphémie, born of a Spanish lady, brought up in Havana, returning to Madrid with a young creole from the Antilles, and every taste ruined in the colonies ; but happily married to an old and powerful wealthy Spanish lord, Don Hijos, Marquis of San-Réal, who, since the occupation of Spain by the French troops, had been living in Paris, residing on the Rue Saint-Lazare.

More out of indifference than out of respect for the innocence of youth, Lord Dudley did not point out to his children nor advise them as to whom their creator was, or of their relationship to him, for he had children everywhere. This is a trifling inconvenience in civilization ; it has its advantages, but it also has its drawbacks ; it is less favorable than unfortunate for its beneficiaries. Lord Dudley, of whom we have spoken so much, came in 1816 to Paris a fugitive from English justice, after he had been to the Orient as a supercargo. This lordly traveler asked, when he saw that beautiful young man, whom he was. Then, after hearing the name :

“Ah ! that is my son—what bad luck,” said he.

This was the story of the young man who, toward the middle of the month of April, 1815, nonchalantly paraded the Broad Walk of the Tuileries, after the manner of all those

animals who, knowing their strength, march stridently along in majesty and peace. Women of the middle-class artlessly turned around to look at him again; other women did not turn themselves but awaited his return, and engraved in their memories, for an after reminiscence, that agreeable form which made the most beautiful among them seem but ugly in comparison.

"What are you doing here on Sunday?" said the Marquis de Ronquerolles to Henri as he passed.

"I'm sizing the fish in the pond," replied the young man.

This exchange of pleasantries was accompanied by two significant looks, and only for this it might have been thought that neither de Ronquerolles nor de Marsay had the air of being known to each other. The young man examined the loungers, with a quick, eager glance and sharp hearing that is particularly Parisian, and who seem at first sight to see nothing and hear nothing, but who in reality see all and hear everything. The young man now took him by the arm.

"Well, how goes it? my dear de Marsay."

"Quite well," replied de Marsay, with a seeming affectionate manner, but which, between young Parisians, means nothing, neither for the present nor the future.

As a fact, the young people of Paris have no resemblance to the young folk of any other city. They are divided into two classes; the young man who has something and the young man who has nothing; or the young man who spends and the young man who saves.

But, and give this careful attention, the one who is drawn to Paris to go the delightful pace of high life does not act the same as he who is indigenous there. He lives there quite as well as other young men, but they are children who enter very late into Parisian existence and remain the dupes of their elders. They do not speculate, they study or they dig; say the others.

Of course there are some young men, rich or poor, who

embrace careers and steadily follow them ; there are a few Émile de Rousseaus, in the skins of citizens, who are never seen in society : diplomatists, as they call these particular simpletons.

Whether they are simpletons or not they augment the number of nonentities and go to make up the population of France. They are always with us ; ever ready at hand to botch public or private business with the flat trowel of mediocrity, boasting of their impotence, which they term morality and honesty. This species of the "prize of excellence" of society infest the administration, the army, the bench, the Chambers, the Court. They thin down and flatten the country and form, as it were, in the body politic, a lymph which overburdens it and renders it flabby. These honest people call men of genius flippant or immoral. So these same flippant folk pay the others for their poorly rendered services ; they may be termed humbugs, but they are respected by the multitude ; happily for France, though, these fashionable young men are unceasingly stigmatized as dudish blockheads.

Nevertheless a mere glance suffices to assure us that there are two species of young men found in fashionable circles—that amiable body of which Henri de Marsay was a member. But observers who are not satisfied with a purely superficial view of things are soon convinced that the differences are purely of a moral nature, and that nothing is more apt to lead astray than a pretty exterior.

However, the whole world goes the pace just the same, speaking at random of things, men, literature, and art ; mouthing "Pitt and Cobourg," each twelvemonth ; interrupting conversation with a pun ; turning to ridicule the learning of a scientist ; scorning everything they do not understand and all they dread ; they set themselves above everybody else, instituting themselves supreme judges of all things. They are always, and for ever, mystifying their fathers and are at all times ready to rain down their crocodile tears on the bosoms of their

✓ mothers. As a rule, they believe in nothing ; they slander women and chaff the modest, though they are really in subjection to dirty courtesans or some old rip of a woman. All of these are rotten to the bone, caused by their depravity, or have gravel, which is brought on by a brutish envy of preferment ; if they are threatened with stone and are probed they are found to have an inside of marble.

In their normal state they are outwardly very amiable, but their friendship is only make-believe. The same slang dominates the ever-changing jargon of their talk ; they aim at the fantastical in their attire ; their pride is in repeating the folly and nonsense of some popular actor or other, and they make their entrance with some silly pun or impertinence of his to in some sort display their knowledge of their idol ; but woe to those who cannot understand them, for they are left with the outstarting eyes of astonishment. They seem equally indifferent to the woes and scourges of their country. They resemble, in fact, the pretty white foam which tips the waves of the ocean during a tempest. On the day of the battle of Waterloo they dressed, dined, danced, and amused themselves, and they do the like during the cholera or while a revolution is on. After all, they spent as much as at other times ; but here begins the comparison. Of this floating fortune and agreeable waste, one is the capital, the others the dependents thereon ; they are the same journeymen, but the bills are settled by the former. Then if the one class, as it seems to those who study it, receive every kind of idea without keeping any, they are compared with those who assimilate all that is good. So those who think they know something, know nothing and understand all ; they present all to those who are in need of nothing and offer nothing to those who lack anything ; these secretly study the thoughts of the others and so place their money as to profit largely in their fortunes by the follies of the others. The one does not give a faithful impression of their soul on the countenance, because it is dulled

as ice is by use and cannot give any reflection ; but the others economize all their senses and life and show it, as one may say, through their windows.

The first, on the faith of a hope, are devoted without conviction to a system, which has the wind and sails with the current, but they skip to another political boat when the first begins to drift ; the second plumb the future, they sound it and see in a faithful policy that which the English see in commercial probity—an element of success. But the young man who has something makes a pun or says something smart on the change of policy in the throne ; those who have nothing make a public calculation, or meanly betray a secret, and attain all things by giving a hand to the grasp of their friends. The one never knows anything of the properties of other people, taking all their ideas for new, as if the world was on the watch for such ; they have unlimited confidence in themselves, and have no enemy so cruel as themselves. But the others are armed with a continual mistrust of men whom they estimate at their real value, and are deep enough to have a thought that is deeper than that of their friends whom they exploit ; then at night, when their heads are on their pillows, they weigh, like a miser, their pieces of gold.

The one is annoyed at an impertinence without brooding over it, and afford pleasure to the diplomatists who pose before them as pulling the principal wires of these puppets—self-love—while the others respectively choose their victims and protectors. Then some day it happens that those who have nothing now have something, and those that had something then have nothing now. Those who see their parvenu comrades in a position ascribe to them cunning and bad hearts, but also as being smart men. “They are very smart” is the great eulogy decreed to those who have reached, by hook or crook, a position in the government, a wife, or a fortune. Among them are met certain young men who play this part, commencing with getting into debt, and, naturally, they are

more dangerous than those who play the risky game without a sou.

The young man who was the intimate friend of Henri de Marsay was a giddy youth, just arrived from the provinces and at the time when young men were the fashion ; he fully understood the art of eating up an inheritance, but he had a last cake to eat in the provinces, an inalienable estate. This was simply a small heritage, without transition, of his meagre hundred francs per month allowed him from the paternal fortune, and which, if he had not had enough intelligence to perceive that they laughed at him, he knew enough to calculate on stopping his career at two-thirds of his capital. He discovered in Paris, by means of some bills for a thousand francs, the exact value of harness, the art of not paying much respect to his gloves, which were ever extended as a token to people he met, and found that a contract was the better plan of dealing with them ; he spoke powerfully and in good terms of his horses and his Pyrenean hounds ; he learned to know, after the launch, to what species a woman belonged by her make-up and the appearance of her shoes ; he studied *écarté*, learned some fashionable words, and conquered, by his sojourn in the Parisian world, the necessary authority to much later import into the provinces the taste for tea, plate in the English fashion, and so gave the right of those about him to scorn him for the rest of his days.

De Marsay had taken to his friendship to serve him in society, like a bold speculator employing a confidential clerk. This false or genuine friendship of de Marsay was a social position for Paul de Manerville, who, on his side, believing it was sincere and strong, exploited in his own manner his intimate friend. He lived in the reflection of his friend, he took him all the time under his umbrella, he had him in his stockings and his boots, he was gilded by his rays. When standing near Henri, the same as when walking by his side, he had the air of saying :

“Do not insult us, we are two tigers.”

Very often he would allow himself to fatuously say:

“If I ask Henri such and such a thing, he is sufficiently my friend to make it known to me.”

But he was very careful never to ask him anything. He was afraid, and his fear, although imperceptible, reacted on others and was of service to de Marsay.

“That de Marsay is a high-spirited man,” said Paul. “Ah! you will see, he will make his mark. It will not astonish me to one day see him the minister for foreign affairs. Nothing can prevent him.”

Then he would make of de Marsay, the same as Corporal Trim made of his cap, one continual play:

“Ask de Marsay, and you will learn the truth.”

Or, again:

“The other day de Marsay and I were hunting together, and he did not seem to think that I could clear a bush without my horse made a running start.”

Or:

“De Marsay and I were at the home of some women, and, on my word of honor, I was——,” and so forth.

So Paul de Manerville cannot be classed among that clan of great, illustrious, and powerful family of ninnies who come to Paris. He would some day become a deputy. At that time he was nothing more, nothing less, than many another young man.

His friend de Marsay thus defined him: “You ask me, whom is this Paul? Why this is Paul de Manerville.”

“I am surprised, my boy, to see you here on Sunday,” said he to De Marsay.

“I might make the same rejoinder.”

“Have you an intrigue?”

“An intrigue.”

“Bah!”

“I can tell you without compromising my passion. A

woman that comes on Sunday to the Tuileries does not value aristocratical gossip."

"Aha!"

"Stop that or I tell you nothing. You laugh too loudly, one would think we had had a too hearty breakfast. Last Thursday, here, on the Terrasse des Feuillants, I was walking along just thinking of nothing. But when I reached the gate at the Rue de Castiglione, by which way I was going out, I found myself face to face with a woman, or rather with a young person, who, even if she had not clasped me round the neck, would, I think, have arrested me less out of humanity's sake than for the profound astonishment with which I was struck by her arms and legs, the latter of which ran from the backbone till stopped by the soles of the feet which were on the ground. I have often experienced from different people a kind of animal magnetism which became very strong at the moment when the affinity is respectively felt. But, my dear fellow, this was not a stupefaction, nor was this a common woman. Morally speaking, this face seemed to say: 'What! there is my ideal, the being of my fancy, of my dreams by day and night. How came he here? Why this morning? Why not yesterday? Take me, I am thine,' *et cetera*!"

"Good," I said to myself, "I will then look into this." Ah! my dear fellow, talk of a figure! the unknown, this creature, is the most adorable woman I have ever met. She belongs to that variety of femininity that the Romans called *fulva, flava*, the woman of flame. What most struck me at first sight, this one with whom I am so smitten has tawny eyes like those of tigers, yellow and luminous like living gold, of gold that thinks, of gold which loves and which you have absolutely in your arms."

"We know all about that, my boy!" exclaimed Paul. "She will come here again some time, this GIRL WITH GOLDEN EYES. She is a young woman in the neighborhood of twenty-two, and whom I have seen here in the time of the Bourbons,

but with a woman who is a hundred thousand times better than herself."

"Hush! you, Paul. It is impossible that any woman can surpass that girl; she resembles a cat who wishes to come and rub against your legs; a pale girl with charcoal tresses, slight in appearance, who has soft threads for the third joint of her fingers; and whose full, rounded cheeks show a white down, whose lines, luminous as a lovely day, begin at the ears and are lost in the throat."

"Ah! but the other, my dear de Marsay. She shows eyes of midnight, not tearful but yet always brilliant; of black eyebrows which are joined and give her an air of giving the lie to the inflexibility expressed in the pucker of her lips, which seem to say that no kiss may ever settle there—such ardent, fresh lips, too. A warm complexion by which a man is scorched as by the sun; but, on my word of honor, she resembles you——"

"Flatterer."

"An arched waist, slender as a corvette built for the chase, and which strikes the merchantman with a French impetuosity."

"Well, my dear boy, why cannot I see it from your point of view?" said de Marsay. "Since I have studied women my unknown has the only maiden's bosom, the voluptuous and ardent form, the sole realization of the woman of my dreams, for me. She is the original of the delirious painting called 'Woman Caressing a Chimera,' the hottest, most infernal inspiration of antique genius; a saint posing as a prostitute for those who copy her for their frescoes and mosaics; for a crowd of bourgeois who cannot see in this cameo anything more than a charm to attach to their watch-chain, whereas it is all woman, an abyss of pleasure down which one may roll without ever finding the end; and yet this is that ideal woman whom one sometimes sees in reality in Spain, Italy, and even occasionally in France.

“ Well, I have reviewed this girl with golden eyes, this woman caressing a chimera ; I have seen her here, on Friday. I presumed that she would come again the next day at the same hour ; I am not mistaken in this. I am well able to remember her without seeing her, to study that indolent walk of the unoccupied woman ; but yet who reveals in her movements a sleeping voluptuousness. Well, when she returns, I shall see her again, I shall worship her anew, and start and shiver afresh. Then, I have observed the genuine Spanish duenna who guards her, a hyena who wears her jealousy as a robe, some female demon well paid to watch that suave creature. I am becoming anxious to know whether the duenna may not be tempted to desert that lovely one. Saturday I was here again. This time I am here, and as she attends this girl of whom I am the chimera, I ask myself if I am doing anything better than posing as the monster of the fresco.”

“ Here she is ! ” said Paul, “ everybody is turning round to look at her——”

The unknown blushed and her eyes scintillated as she perceived Henri ; she stopped a moment, then passed on.

“ What do you think of that ? ” cried Paul, pleasantly.

The duenna looked fixedly and with attention at the two young men. When the unknown and Henri again met each other, the young girl brushed with her hand against the hand of the young man. Then she turned toward them smiling with passion ; but the duenna forcibly drew her toward the gate of the Rue de Castiglione.

The two friends followed the young girl, admiring the magnificent sinuosity of that neck where it joined the head by a combination of vigorous lines, which was relieved by some stray little curls of hair. The girl with golden eyes had finely formed feet, small and rounded, which lent an added attraction to a dainty imagination. She was also elegantly attired and carried her dress like one used to the Court. As she walked she would at times turn around to look at Henri, and

seemed to dislike the old woman, who at times seemed to be her mistress while she was her slave. She could beat her unmercifully without receiving a blow in return. All reached the gate together, the two friends behind the others. Two liveried valets occupied the footboard of a coupé in elegant taste and showing a coat-of-arms. The girl with golden eyes first got in, taking that side which would be nearest the two friends as the vehicle turned around ; she placed her hand on the curtains and waved her handkerchief, unknown to the duenna, mocking at the curious onlookers but saying publicly, as she waved the handkerchief : "Follow me."

"Have you ever seen better play with a handkerchief than that ?" said Henri to Paul de Manerville.

Then seeing a hack near by he went after the coupé, making a sign to the driver, saying :

"Follow that coupé, you shall have ten francs. Farewell, Paul."

The hack followed the coupé. That vehicle turned into the Rue Saint-Lazare and stopped at one of the handsomest mansions in the quarter.

De Marsay was not surprised. Every other young man would have obeyed a desire of at once taking some token of a girl who had realized so fully his ideas of the most luminous imprints of the women in Oriental poetry ; but more adroit than to so compromise the future of his lucky fortune, he had the hack continue on down the Rue Saint-Lazare, and from there returned to his hôtel. The next day his head valet, named Laurent, a boy as wily as a Frontin of the old comedy, went around and about the house habited by the unknown, at about the time when the letters were distributed. So that he might have the chance of spying at his ease and roaming around the hôtel, he had, following the custom of police spies, disguised himself, buying the cast-off suit of an Auvergnat and trying to make his features resemble one. When the letter-carrier, who this morning did the service of the Rue Saint-

Lazare, came by, Laurent pretended to be a commissioner who was looking for some person's name for whom he had a parcel, and he asked the letter-carrier. Mistaken by his appearance, this so picturesque a personage in the midst of Parisian civilization, told him that the hôtel in which lived the girl with golden eyes belonged to Don Hijos, Marquis de San-Réal, a Spanish grandee. Naturally, the Auvergnat had no business with the marquis.

"My parcel," said he, "is for the marquise."

"She is away from home," replied the letter-carrier. "Her letters are returned to London."

"The marquise has not a young girl who——?"

"Ah!" said the letter-carrier, interrupting the valet and looking attentively at him, "you are as much a commissioner as I am a ballet-girl."

Laurent slipped some pieces of gold into the letter-carrier's hand, with a pleasant jingle which made him smile.

"There, that's the name of your quarry," said he, taking out of his leather-bag a letter bearing the London postmark, and which was addressed: *A mademoiselle Paquita Valdès, Rue Saint-Lazare, hôtel San-Réal, Paris*, written in long angular characters which showed it was in a woman's hand.

"Could you furnish a bottle of Chablis, with a chop and mushrooms, and preceded by about a dozen oysters?" said Laurent, who wished to secure the precious friendship of the letter-carrier.

"At half-past nine, when I have finished my round. Where?"

"At the corner of the Rue de la Chaussée-d'Antin and the Rue Neuve-des-Mathurins, at the Puits Sans Vin," said Laurent.

"Listen, my friend," said the functionary, as he joined Laurent, about an hour after their first meeting; "if your master is in love with that girl, he is undertaking a big job. I doubt that you will be able to see her. For ten years I have

been a letter-carrier in Paris and have made a pretty careful study of doors, but I can safely say, without fear of being thought crazy by my comrades, that I do not know a door so mysterious as the one of Monsieur de San-Réal. No person can enter the hôtel without knowing the password ; and you will further observe that it has been expressly selected for being in the centre of the garden, so as to prevent all communication with other houses.

“The janitor is an old Spaniard who cannot speak one word of French, but who has a disfigured face, which is as keen as Vidocq’s in learning who is who. If the first guard could be passed by a lover by any mistake, by a robber, or by yourself, which is most unlikely, then in the first hallway, which is closed by a glass-door, you would encounter a major-domo trotting around like a footman, an old joker, who is still more savage and morose than the janitor.

“If one jumps the coach-yard gate, my major-domo sallies out and interrogates you under the gallery, and subjects you to as much questioning as a criminal. This is what happens to me, a plain letter-carrier. I should have to take a ‘hemisphere’ for a disguise,” said he, smiling at his joke and cocking his eye. “When people call who have no legitimate reason, I can’t say how they will be treated, for no one in the quarter has ever had speech with them ; I don’t know but what they issue tokens for those to whom they will speak ; they make themselves unapproachable, whether it is that fear of being shot or that they have staked some great sum to insure their discretion. If your master loves Mademoiselle Paquita Valdès enough to surmount these obstacles, even then he is not sure of triumphing over Doña Concha Marialva, the duenna who accompanies her everywhere and who never quits her side.. These two women present the appearance of being sewn together.”

“That is what you tell me, my estimable letter-carrier,” said Laurent, “after having swallowed your wine ; you only

confirm what I at first apprehended. On the faith of an honest man, I think you are making game of me. The fruit trees in front of the building—could not we get up them at night? but then I suppose dogs are kept from whom food has been withheld, so as to make them more wakeful and vicious. Those damned animals are quite capable of making a meal off one and spitting out the pieces. You speak of them being afraid of bullets, but it seems to me that they would stick at nothing."

"The porter at Monsieur le Baron de Nucingen's place, whose garden adjoins the San-Réal mansion, says that one might as well try to reach the sky as that," said the letter-carrier.

"Good! my master knows him," said Laurent. "Do you know," he went on, leering at the letter-carrier, "that I belong to a master who is a man of high spirit, and, if he took it into his head, he would plant a kiss on the feet of an empress, and that he will find some means of passing through this? If he had need of you, and I desired you, for he is very generous, could we count on you?"

"Bless my heart, Monsieur Laurent, my name is Moinot. Really my name is written the same as a *moineau*\*—M-o-i-n-o-t, Moinot."

"Just so," said Laurent.

"I live on the Rue des Trois-Frères, No. 11, on the fifth," continued Moinot. "I have a wife and four children. If you can show that there is nothing will hurt my conscience or interfere with my duty to the government, you understand, I am yours."

"You are a brave fellow," said Laurent, pressing his hand.

"Paquita Valdès is undoubtedly the mistress of the Marquis de San-Réal, the friend of King Ferdinand. He is an old Spanish corpse, eighty years old, and is capable of taking

\* *Moineau* (sparrow) and *Moinot* are pronounced alike.

every conceivable precaution," said Henri, when his valet had informed him of the result of his researches.

"Monsieur," said Laurent, "unless you go there in a balloon I don't see how you are going to get into the mansion."

"You are a dummy. Is it then necessary to go into the hôtel to have Paquita, when Paquita is likely to come out at any moment?"

"But, monsieur, the duenna."

"She may keep her room for some days—your duenna."

"And then we have Paquita," said Laurent, rubbing his hands.

"Idiot!" answered Henri. "I will condemn you to the Concha if you have the impertinence to speak in that manner of a woman before I have possessed her. Look after my clothes, I am going out."

For some little time Henri sat plunged in happy thoughts. Being the darling of women, he was always able to obtain all that he pleased to desire of them; and this was when he thought of a woman without loving her: who then could resist this young man armed with beauty and strength of body and with intelligence and graciousness? But having such easy triumphs de Marsay had become weary of them; so, for the past two years, he had been sick of them. Now plunged into the depths of voluptuousness he found that he had gathered more gravel than pearls. Therefore he had come, as sovereigns do, to implore some chance obstacle to his victory; some enterprise which would demand the employment of all his moral power and active physical energies.

Although Paquita Valdès displayed to him the marvelous assemblage of perfections which he had never before seen except in detail, the attraction seemed almost null. A constant satiety had weakened the sentiment of love in his heart. Like old and worn-out men, he had no more extravagant caprices, his taste was ruined, his fancies satisfied; he no longer had any sweet memories in his heart.

Among young men love is the most beautiful of sentiments: it flourishes in the life of the soul, it arouses by a solar power the most delightful inspirations and the greatest thoughts; the first-fruits of all things have the most delicious flavor. Among men love becomes a passion: strength leads to its abuse. With the old it turns to a vice—impotence being the end. Henri was at the same time an old man and a young one.

He had failed to arouse an emotion of real love, the same as Lovelace with Clarissa Harlowe. Without the reflection of that unfindable magic pearl, he could not have those agitating passions which are the glory of the Parisian, whether it was that he himself had experienced some degree or other of corruption with a woman, or whether he was only stimulating his curiosity. Laurent's report made him willing to give an enormous price for the girl with golden eyes. He would take issue with his secret enemy, who seemed equally dangerous and subtile, and, to gain the victory, all the forces which Henri could produce would be necessary.

He was going to play that eternally old comedy, which is always new, and in which the characters were an old man, a young girl, and a lover: Don Hijos, Paquita, and de Marsay. If Laurent was as valuable as Figaro, the duenna seemed incorruptible. So this drama in real life was more strongly held by chance than had ever been the case by any dramatic author. But is there such a thing as chance to a man of genius?

“It seems necessary to play their game,” said Henri.

“Well,” said Paul de Manerville, who had just come in, “where are we? I came to breakfast with you.”

“So,” said Henri. “Why wouldn't it shock you if I were to make my toilette before you?”

“What a joke!”

“We do everything English just now, but at the same time we won't become hypocrites and prudes like them,” said Henri.

Laurent had brought out all his master's things, different suits and pretty nicknacks, which caused Paul to say :

“ But you are not going out for two hours yet ? ”

“ No, ” replied Henri, “ not for two hours and a half.”

“ Well, then, between ourselves I wish you would tell me and explain to me why a superior man such as yourself, for you are a superior man, affects to overwork a foppery which is not natural to him. Why spend two hours and a half in currying yourself when a quarter of an hour is enough in which to take a bath, and in a brace of shakes you can comb your hair and dress yourself ? That's my style.”

“ It is the fault of my great love, my precious ninny, for I confide all my best thoughts to you, ” said the young man, who just then was brushing his feet with a soft brush and cleansing them with English soap.

“ But I have acknowledged my most sincere attachment to you, ” replied Paul de Manerville, “ and now I find that you love another more than me.”

“ You must have duly observed, if you are capable of noting a moral fact, that woman likes a fop, ” answered de Marsay, without replying in any way to Paul's declaration.

“ Do you know why it is that women love dandies ? My friend, fops are the only men who properly care for themselves the same as they do. Now, by caring for one's self don't we show that we care for others ? The man who does this is precisely the man whom women pet. Love is essentially an extortioner. I cannot say that this excess of propriety of theirs should make us inordinately vain. Find one who cares passionately for a ‘neglected’ person ; don't you find a remarkable man ? So this fact is the reason for it : we obey it and set it down to the account of women's envy, a most foolish idea which runs through everybody's head. On the contrary, I have seen remarkably strong men flung aside owing to the cause of their carelessness of themselves. A dude who is occupied in personal attention is taken up with a trifle,

with little things. And what then is woman? a little thing, a bundle of trifles. With two words spoken in the air, can't she make you pass a few bad hours? She is sure that the fop is occupied as she is, therefore she does not think of the great things. She is not always in négligé for fame, ambition, politics, art—those great women of the public which, to her, are her rivals.

"Then the dude has the courage to cover himself with ridicule to please a woman, and her heart is full of recompenses for the man who is made ridiculous for love of her. Indeed, a fop cannot help being a fop if he has a reason for being one. These are they to whom women give a brevet rank. The dude is the colonel of love, he has good luck, he has his regiment of women, of whom he is the commander. My dear boy, in Paris all is known, and a man cannot be a fop *gratis*. You who have not got a woman, and who are perhaps the better for not having one, have you ever tried your luck as a dude? You would make yourself so ridiculous that it would be your death. You become a judge on two feet, and you are a condemned man. You might as well be executed or isolated, which is the same thing.

"To signify *silliness*, as Monsieur de la Fayette signifies *America*; Monsieur de Talleyrand, *diplomacy*; Désangiers, *singing*; Monsieur de Ségur, *romance*. If they go among those people they think more of their characteristics than themselves. Here is how we sum things up in France—every sovereignty is unjust. Monsieur de Talleyrand may be a great financier, Monsieur de la Fayette a tyrant, and Désangiers an administrator. You might have forty women next year, but not one of them would publicly acknowledge it. So therefore your simplicity, my friend Paul, is a sign of unquestioned power of conquest over the female folk.

"A man who loves a large number of women passes for possessing very superior qualities, and then this is what he will become—unfortunate. But do you think that they care

nothing whether or not they have the right of coming to your salon, as they look at all the world from over their high cravats, or squinting through their eyeglasses, and can scorn the most superior man if he wears a vest which is a back number? (Laurent, you make me sick!) After breakfast, Paul, we will take in the Tuileries to see the adorable girl with golden eyes."

When, after having made an excellent repast, the two young men had surveyed the Terrasse des Feuillants and the Broad Walk of the Tuileries, they were unable to catch sight of the sublime Paquita Valdès, on account of finding themselves among fifty of the most fashionable young men in Paris —all musk, high collars, boots, spurs, whips, marching, laughing, and all given to the devil.

"By the white mass!" said Henri; "I have struck the best idea in the world. This girl receives letters from London; we might bribe or intoxicate the letter-carrier, unclose the letter, naturally to read it, then slip in a sweet little note, and reseal it. The old tyrant, *crudel tiranno*, must without a doubt know the person who writes these letters from London, and he would not have the least misgivings."

Next day de Marsay again promenaded in the sun on the Terrasse des Feuillants, and there he saw Paquita Valdès; she was more already than his passion had embellished her. He gazed with seriousness in those eyes whose flashes seemed to have the nature of the rays of the sun, and whose ardor summed up a perfect body where all was voluptuousness. De Marsay was scorched as he gazed on the dress of that seductive maiden when he met her in their promenade, but his efforts at communication were all in vain.

At the time when he again repassed Paquita and her duenna, he placed himself so that he would be on the side of the girl with golden eyes when she turned around; Paquita, no less impatient, advanced toward him with eagerness, and he felt a pressure of the hand by hers which was at the same time so

quickly done and with such passionate significance that he thought he had received an electric shock. For a moment all the emotions of youth surged in his heart. When the two lovers looked at each other, Paquita seemed abashed ; she lowered her eyes before Henri's gaze, but his cool survey of her feet and figure had that of those whom women, before the Revolution, called "their conqueror."

"I am resolved to have that girl for my mistress," said Henri to himself.

As he followed her to the end of the terrace, by the side of the Place Louis XV., he perceived the old Marquis de San-Réal, who was walking, supported on the arm of his valet, with all the care of a gouty and dyspeptic man. Doña Concha, who mistrusted Henri, placed Paquita between herself and the old man.

"Oh ! that's it," said de Marsay, casting a look of disdain on the duenna ; "if she doesn't lookout she'll get a small dose of opium or some other narcotic. We know our mythology and the story of Argus."

Before getting into her carriage the girl with golden eyes exchanged a glance with her lover, a look which was anything but doubtful and which ravished Henri ; but the duenna caught it and spoke sharply to Paquita, who threw herself back in the coupé with an air of desperation. For some days Paquita did not again visit the Tuilleries.

Laurent, who by order of his master had been on the lookout around the San-Réal mansion, was informed by the neighbors that neither the two women nor the old marquis had gone out since the day when the duenna had surprised the glance of recognition between Henri and the young girl under her charge. The so weak tie which united the two lovers was thus already broken.

Some days after, without any person having the least idea of his doings, de Marsay had decided on his course ; he had made a seal and provided some sealing-wax, an exact counter-

part of the impression and wax which sealed the letters sent from London to Mlle. Valdès; also similar paper to that used by her correspondent; then he provided all the requisite articles and the stamps necessary to give the appearance of the English and French postmarks. He had written the following epistle, to which he gave every appearance of a letter sent from London:

Dearest Paquita, I cannot by words attempt to paint with what passion you have inspired me. If, to my great happiness, you partake the like sentiment, know that I have found this means of corresponding with you. My name is Adolphe de Gouges, and I reside on the Rue de l'Université, No. 54. If you are too closely watched to be able to write, or if you have neither paper nor pens, I shall know by your silence. Therefore if to-morrow, between eight o'clock in the morning and ten at night, you have not thrown a letter in reply over the wall of your garden into that of the Baron de Nucingen, where I shall remain the whole day, a man who is entirely devoted to my interests will secretly sling two phials over the wall, at the end of a cord, at ten o'clock the following morning. Manage to go out for your walk about that time. One of the phials will contain opium for sending your Argus off to sleep, six drops will be enough to give her; the other contains ink. The ink phial is of cut glass and the other is smooth. Both are thin and flat enough to be concealed in your corset. All that I have already done to enable me to correspond with you will prove to you whether I was wrong in saying that I love you. If you doubt this I vow to you that, to be given an interview of one hour with you, I would give my life for the privilege.

“They think this sort of thing is fine, these poor creatures,” said de Marsay; “and they are right. What should we think of a woman who would not allow herself to be seduced by a love-letter accompanied by circumstances so convincing?”

Next day this letter was delivered by Moinot, the letter-carrier, about eight o'clock in the morning, to the janitor of the San-Réal mansion.

To be nearer the field of battle de Marsay had taken breakfast with Paul, who lived in the Rue de la Pépinière. At two

o'clock, at the moment when the two friends were bursting with laughter over the discomfiture of a young man who had attempted to lead the train of fashion without having the fortune necessary to assist him, and who had just reached the end of his tether, Henri's coachman came in to seek his master at Paul's house, and to introduce to him a mysterious personage, who wished to speak to him and him alone.

This person was a mulatto, who would undoubtedly have inspired Talma for the play of *Othello*, if he had but met him. Never did an African show such grandeur of vengeance or such a quickness of perception, combined with an instant execution of his thoughts ; he had the strength of the Moor and the indiscretion of a child. His dark eyes were fixed like those of a bird of prey and were, like those of a vulture, set in a bluish membrane devoid of eyelashes. His small, low forehead had something menacing about it. It was evident that this man was the slave of one single thought. His nervous arms seemed not to belong to him. He was accompanied by another man, one at whom all imaginations shiver and shake like Greenland, and like what is described in New England as an "unlucky man,"\* or something after this phrase.

This word will enable all the world to divine his appearance after the particular ideas prevailing in each country. But who can figure his pallid face, wrinkled, red at the extremities, and his long beard ? Who can see his necktie like a yellow string, his greasy shirt-collar, his used-up hat, his greenish greatcoat, his piteous trousers, his vest awry, his imitation gold pin, his broken shoes, the strings of which had dabbled in the mud ? Who can comprehend the immensity of his past and present poverty ? Who ? The Parisian alone. The man of ill-luck in Paris is the most thoroughly unlucky man in the whole world, for he still possesses the delight of knowing how unlucky he has been. The mulatto seemed to be an

\* *C'était un homme malheureux.*

executioner of Louis XI., holding up a man whom he had hung.

“ For which of our sins is it that we must meet these two scallawags? ” said Henri.

“ By the gods! that fellow there gives me the shivers,” replied Paul.

“ Who are you, you that has the manner of being the better Christian of the two? ” said Henri, turning to the unlucky man.

The mulatto fixed his gaze on the two young men, like a man who heard nothing, and yet who tried nevertheless to guess something of what was said by gestures and the movements of the lips.

“ I am a public writer and interpreter. I live at the Palais de Justice, and my name is Poincet.”

“ Good. And who is that? ” said Henri, pointing to the mulatto.

“ I don’t know ; he speaks nothing but a Spanish jargon ; I brought him here that he might speak to you.”

The mulatto drew from his pocket the letter that Henri had written Mlle. Paquita—he, Henri!—who at once threw it on the fire.

“ Well, there goes the commencement of my scheme,” said he to himself. “ Paul, leave us for a few moments.”

“ I translated that letter for him,” said the interpreter, when they were alone. “ When I had done this, he went, I don’t know where. Then he returned and asked me to bring him here, promising me two louis if I would do so.”

“ What does he say to me, is it Chinese? ” asked Henri.

“ I could not understand him if he spoke *Chinese*, ” said the interpreter. “ He says, monsieur, ” continued he after listening to the unknown, “ that he would like to meet you tomorrow night at half-past ten, on the Boulevard Montmartre, near the café. You will there see a carriage into which you must get, saying to the one who opens the door the one word,

*cortejo*; a Spanish word which is equivalent to saying ‘lover,’ ” added Poincet, casting a look of congratulation on Henri.

“ Well ! ”

The mulatto was about giving Poincet the two louis, but de Marsay would not allow him to reward the interpreter; while he himself was paying him, the mulatto spoke again.

“ What does he say ? ”

“ He cautions me,” replied the unlucky man, “ that if I commit the least indiscretion he will strangle me. He is a pretty gentleman, is very powerful, and has the air of being capable of doing as he says.”

“ I am sure of it,” replied Henri, “ by the way in which he spoke.”

“ He added,” continued the interpreter, “ that the person who conducts you and yourself must exercise the greatest prudence in all your actions, both for your own and her sake; for daggers are raised above your heads which can readily be plunged into your hearts without any human power being able to prevent.”

“ He said that, eh? All the better; this makes it more amusing. You may come in again, Paul,” he cried to his friend.

The mulatto, who had not once removed his eyes from Paquita Valdès’ lover, gazed at him with a magnetic look, until he followed the interpreter from the room.

“ Well, I am in for a most romantic adventure,” said Henri, when Paul returned. “ On the strength of having participated in a number of others, I finish by meeting in Paris with an intrigue accompanied by dangerous surroundings and perils. Ah, the deuce, how brave danger renders a woman! Restraine a woman, constrain her will, and is she not given the right and courage to in a moment leap over all barriers placed around her for years and to issue forth? Gentle creature, be it so, jump. To perish? poor girl. Of daggers? all the imagining of women. They experience all the reward

which their little pleasantry is worth. Now be all my thoughts of thee, Paquita ; to only think of thee, my girl ! The devil take me ! all I know is that she is a handsome girl ; this masterpiece of nature is for me ; the adventure is lost in its cream."

Notwithstanding these light words, the young man had repaired to Henri's home, who, to await the morrow without suffering, had recourse to extravagant pleasures ; he played, dined, and supped with his friend ; he drank like a coachman, ate like a German, and won ten or twelve thousand francs at the gaming-table. He went to the Rocher de Cancale at two o'clock in the morning, slept like a child, rising the next day as fresh as a rose, dressed himself to go to the Tuileries, and proposed a horseback ride after having seen Paquita ; he gained thereby an appetite for dinner, as well as passing the time.

At the hour mentioned, Henri was on the boulevard ; he saw the carriage, gave the password to a man who appeared to be the mulatto. Hearing the word, the man opened the door and quickly climbed on the box-seat. Henri was rapidly carried into Paris, but his thoughts left him but little faculty of noticing the streets through which he passed ; he did not even know where he was when the carriage stopped.

The mulatto took him into a house in which the stairs were seen to be near the carriage-gate. This stairway was dark ; so also was the place where Henri was obliged to wait during the time that the mulatto took in opening the door of a humid apartment, nauseous and without any light, and whose rooms were barely distinguishable by the candle which his guide found in the vestibule ; it appeared empty to him, and the movables had a bad odor, like those have whose occupants are traveling. He recognized a similar sensation to the one he experienced when reading one of Anne Radcliffe's romances, where the heroes traverse the cold, dark halls of some fearful and deserted habitation.

At length the mulatto opened the door of a salon. In it

there was some old furniture and older fashioned curtains, though the room was ornamented to resemble the salon of a house of ill-fame. There were the same pretensions to elegance and the same collection of things in bad taste, the same dust and dirt. On a couch, covered with red, Utrecht velvet, in the corner of the fireplace which smoked and the fire of which was buried in ashes, sat an old, badly clothed woman, her head-dress being one of those turbans which are known to have been invented by Englishwomen when they have arrived at a certain age, and who should become an infinite success in China, where the idea of beauty is a monstrosity. The salon, the old woman, the cold hearth, all these had chilled his love, if Paquita had not been here, for any cause, in a voluptuous dressing-gown, loosing and throwing her glances of gold and flame, liberating and showing her rounded foot, showing freedom in her luminous movements.

This first interview was like that of all first meetings given to all passionate folk, who quickly overleap every distance to attain what they ardently desire, without the least restraint. It was impossible that he should not meet with the self-same discordant surroundings in this position, troublesome at the moment when her soul becomes the same as yours. So desire gives boldness to the man and he is disposed to care for nothing; under pain of not being a woman, his mistress will go to some extremes to see whether he really loves her; she is afraid of finding the time arrive too quickly when she will be face to face with the necessity of giving that, which for the majority of women is equivalent to a fall down a precipice, and the depths of which are to her unknown. The involuntary frigidity of that woman contrasts with her passion acknowledged and of course reacted upon by the lover with whom she is smitten. These ideas, which often float like vapors about the soul, are termed therefore naught but a passing malady.

In that sweet journey that two beings take in traveling

through the beautiful land of love, that time is like a heath to cross, a heath without furze, at one time humid, at another warm, filled with ardent sands, interspersed with marshes, and which have pleasant coppices clad in roses under which love and its accompanying delights can be enjoyed on the rich carpet of fine verdure.

Very often the spiritual man finds himself saluted with a coarse jest by some brute who employs this as an answer to everything ; his mind is benumbed under the glacial pressure of his desire. To him it is impossible that there can be two equally beautiful spirits—the spiritual and the animal passion ; as we are now speaking of the most simple commonplace topics, such as a chance word, the thrill of a glance, the flash of a touch, a happy transition of soul which draws out the bloom of sentiment unconfined, in which they may roll without a downfall. This state of mind is always right in the violence of its feelings. Two beings who love but feebly can experience nothing like unto this. The effect of such a crisis can only be compared to that heat which is produced by a clear sky. Nature seems at first sight to be covered with a veil of gauze, the blue of the firmament appears black, an excess of light resembles shadow.

To Henri and the fair Spaniard it came with equal violence ; and that static law by virtue of which two equal forces each annuls the other when they meet is precisely the same in the realm of morals. Then the embarrassment of this moment was strangely augmented by the presence of the old mummy. Everything either alarms or delights love, in everything there is a sense which presages happiness or ill-fortune. This decrepit woman was there like a poor conclusion, and figured as the horrid train of snakes by which Greek genius symbolized the followers of its chimeras and sirens ; so seductive, so deceiving by their bodies, as all passions are at their inception. Although Henri was not strong-minded, a man grand beyond

belief, this combination of surroundings had struck him down. The strongest men are naturally the most impressionable ones, consequently the most superstitious, so they always speak of superstition as being their judgment at first sight ; whereby they do, without a doubt, perceive the result of causes hidden from other eyes, but plainly discernible to theirs.

The Spanish woman profited by this moment of stupor to fall into an infinite ecstasy of adoration which seizes the heart of a woman when she really loves and finds herself in the presence of an idol for whom she had vainly hoped. Her eyes were full of joy and happiness, which escaped in brilliant flashes. She was under the charm, fearlessly intoxicated with a felicity of which she had long dreamed. She was now able to see Henri's marvelous beauty, so that all the phantasmagoria of rags, old age, worn-out red hangings, of old green mats before the arm-chairs, the red square of carpet so badly worn, and all this infirm luxury and suffering speedily disappeared. The salon was illuminated ; he no longer saw as through a floating mist that terrible harpy, fixed and mute on her red couch, whose yellow eyes betrayed the servile sentiments which had unhappily inspired him, or was she longer the cause of a vice under which he had been ensnared or she had fallen like a tyrant who has suddenly come under the flagellations of his despotism. Her eyes shone cold like those of a tiger in a cage which knows its powerlessness and finds itself compelled to swallow its envy of destruction.

“Who is that woman ?” asked Henri of Paquita.

Paquita made no reply to this question. She made a sign that she did not understand French, and asked Henri if he spoke English. De Marsay then repeated the question in English.

“That is the only woman whom I dare trust, although she has already sold me,” said Paquita, tranquilly. “My dear Adolphe, this is my mother, a slave who was bought in Georgia\*

\* Asia Minor.

for her rare beauty, but who now has but little to do with her owner. She speaks only her mother-tongue."

The attitude of the old woman and the envy she showed of the movements of her daughter and Henri, as she guessed what passed between them, was a sudden revelation to the young man, it made it easy of explanation.

"Paquita," said he, "are you never at liberty?"

"Never," she replied, with a wearied air. "Every day is like every other to us."

She dropped her eyes, looked at his hand, then took his right hand and placed it on the fingers of her left hand, pointing to her prettier ones, which were the most beautiful that Henri had ever seen.

"One, two, three—"

She counted up to a dozen.

"Yes," said she, "we have twelve days."

"And after those?"

"After," said she, stopping, absorbed, like a feeble woman before the executioner's axe, killed in advance by a dread which had despoiled her of that magnificent energy with which, as it seemed to him, nature had furnished her. But to him it had not departed; it seemed rather to augment her voluptuousness and transmute the grossest pleasures into endless poems.

"After!" she repeated.

Her eyes became fixed; she seemed to be contemplating some distant, menacing object.

"I don't know," said she.

"This girl is a fool," said Henri to himself, falling into strange reflections.

Paquita seemed to be occupied with something that had nothing to do with him, like a fashionable woman who is equally driven by her remorse and her passion. It might be that she had another love in her heart which she had for the nonce forgotten, but which had again taken its turn. In a

moment Henri was assailed by a thousand contradictory thoughts. To him this girl had become a mystery; but as he contemplated her with the knowing attention of an old rounder, his passionate desires were aflame once more, like that King of the East who demanded that a new pleasure be invented for him, with that dreadful thirst with which all great souls are seized.

Henri found in Paquita the richest organization that ever Nature had delighted in making for love. The play to be expected from that machine, the soul placed to one side, had frightened every other man but de Marsay; but he was fascinated by this rich harvest of promised delights; by that constant variety of happiness, the dream of every man, and which every woman loves to place before her as her ambition. He was excited by the infinite love shown so palpably, and was transported to the most excessive of creature delights. He most distinctly saw all this in the woman before him, more so than when he had first seen her, for she complacently allowed herself to be gazed at, happy in being admired. De Marsay's admiration of her had become a secret torment, and she revealed it in its entirety, throwing him a glance which was altogether Spanish, and as though she had always been used to receiving the like homage.

"If you do not become mine, and mine alone, I shall kill you," he exclaimed.

As she heard this Paquita veiled her face in her hands and naïvely cried:

"Holy Virgin! when I am thrust myself."

She arose, ran and threw herself on the red lounge, plunging her head in the rags covering her mother's bosom, and burst into tears. The old woman received her daughter without stirring out of her immobility, and not making a sign. The mother possessed to a high degree that gravity of savage folk, that impassiveness of a statue which frustrates all curiosity. Did she, or did she not, love her daughter? could not be

answered. Under a mask which concealed every human feeling, good and bad alike, naught could be made of this creature. Her glance fell lightly on her daughter's beautiful hair, which was partly covered under a mantilla, and then to Henri's face, which she observed with an inexplicable curiosity. She seemed to be asking herself by what witchcraft had he come to be there ; by what caprice of Nature had he been made so seductive.

“These women are mocking me ! ” said Henri.

At this moment Paquita raised her head, threw on him one of those glances which burn into the soul. She appeared so lovely that he swore to himself that he would possess this treasure of loveliness.

“Dear Paquita, come to me.”

“Do you want to kill me ? ” said she, timorous, palpitating, uneasy, but drawn toward him by an inexplicable power.

“Kill you, I ! ” said he, smiling.

Paquita uttered a startled cry, said one word to her mother, who authoritatively took Henri's hand, then that of her daughter, looking at both of them for a long time, then tossed her head in a manner that was horribly significant.

“Come to me this evening, this moment ; be mine, do not leave me ; I am willing. Paquita ! don't you love me ? Come then ! ”

In a moment he said a thousand insensate words, with the rapidity of a torrent dashing down and between the rocks, repeating the same again and again in a thousand different forms.

“It is the same voice,” said Paquita, with sadness ; but de Marsay heard her not ; “the same ardor,” added she.

“Well, yes,” said she, with an abandon of passion which it is impossible to express. “Yes, but not to-night. This evening, Adolphe, I gave but little opium to la Concha ; should she revive before my return, I am lost. At this very moment the whole house believes that I am asleep in my own chamber.

In two days go to the same place, speak the same word to the same man. That man is my foster father ; Cristemio worships me and would die for me in awful torment without disclosing one word against me. Farewell ! ” said she, seizing Henri by the neck and entwining herself around him like a serpent.

She squeezed him from all sides at once, she placed his head on her bosom and held up her lips to his, and took a kiss that gave both of them such a dizziness that de Marsay thought that the earth had opened, and that made Paquita cry out :

“ Go on ! ” in a voice which told plainly enough how little she was her own mistress. But still she guarded herself, although she cried out all the more : “ Come on,” as she led him to the stairs.

There the mulatto, whose white eyes brightened at the sight of Paquita, took the light from the hand of his idol and showed Henri to the street. He left the light under the archway of the door, opened the gate, joined Henri in the carriage, and drove him to the Boulevard des Italiens with marvelous rapidity. The horses seemed imbued with the devil.

The scene was like a dream to de Marsay, but yet one of those visions that, after vanishing away, leave in the soul a feeling of supernatural voluptuousness, after which a man runs during the rest of his life. One single kiss had sufficed. No meeting had ever been passed in a more decent manner, or more chaste or colder perhaps, in that place, horrible by what regularly took place therein, before a more hideous divinity ; for that mother stayed in Henri’s mind like some hellish thing, squat, cadaverous, vicious, of such savage ferocity, that all the fantasies of painters and poets have failed as yet to divine it. As a matter of fact, never had an assignation excited his senses equal to this one, neither had there ever been revealed to him an equal ardor of voluptuousness, nor had love

ever gushed out from the centre of his being and diffused itself like an atmosphere around a man, like unto this. There was something sombre, mysterious, sweet, and tender ; there was something at once of constraint and expansion, a blending of the horrible and the celestial, of paradise and hell, which had the effect of intoxication upon de Marsay. It overpowered him, yet he was great enough, nevertheless, to have the power of resisting this drunkenness of delights.

For the full understanding of his conduct at the denouement of this story, it becomes necessary to explain how his mind was so broad at an age when young men's ordinarily shrink up when they mix with women or are too much taken with them. He was great by a combination of secret circumstances which had invested him with an enormous power unknown to others. This young man held in his hand a sceptre more puissant than that wielded by any modern king, all of whom are curbed more by the laws than their wills.

De Marsay exerted the autocratic power of an Oriental despot.

But this power, so stupidly exercised in Asia by brutish men, was coupled with an European intelligence, by the French spirit, the most vital, the finest steel of all intelligent instruments. Henri could do what he would to the advantage of his pleasures and vanities. This invisible action on society was the investiture of a real but secret majesty, which had no force nor ability to turn against himself. It was his opinion that Louis XIV. did not possess a power equal to his, but that the most arrogant of Caliphs, of Pharaohs, of Xerxes, who believed their line divine, was the same as his, when they imitated God by veiling themselves before their subjects, under the pretense that their glances were death. So without having any remorse at being at once the judge and the client, de Marsay coolly condemned the man or woman to death who had seriously offended him ; although very often rashly pronounced, the verdict was irrevocable.

A mistake was a misfortune, and seemed to them something like the thunderbolt which strikes some happy Parisian in a coach, instead of crushing the old coachman who was driving him to an assignation. So the titter and profound pleasantry which distinguished the conversation of this young man was generally the cause of dread to her; people did not experience any envy when they struck against him. Women have a prodigious liking for those men whom they call *pashas* among themselves; who seem to be companions of lions and executioners, and who walk appareled in terror. It results among these men in a security of action, a certainty of power, a pride of looks, a leonine spirit, which to women realizes the type of strength of which they all dream. Such was de Marsay.

Just now he was happy in the thought of his future. He became young and willowy; he had no vision of love as he went to bed. He there dreamed of the girl with golden eyes, who seemed to return to the passionate scene in which the young people had taken part. It was a dream of monstrosities, of unseizable phantasies, full of light which revealed invisible worlds, but always in an incomplete state, for a veil interposed which changed the optical conditions.

The next day, and the one following, Henri disappeared without letting any one know whither he had gone. His power did not belong to him under certain conditions, and, luckily for him, during these two days he was a simple soldier at the service of the demon whom he had taken into his talismanic existence. But, at the hour and on the evening mentioned, he awaited the carriage on the boulevard, which was not long in coming. The mulattó approached Henri to say to him, in a sentence of French he had learned by heart:

“If you would go with me, I am told by her to ask whether you will consent that I bandage your eyes?”

Cristemio held out a silk handkerchief.

“No!” said Henri, whose mind suddenly and powerfully revolted.

He made as though he would enter, but the mulatto gave a signal and carriage started off.

“Yes!” cried de Marsay, furious at the loss of the happiness he had promised himself. Otherwise, he saw the impossibility of capitulating to a slave whose obedience was as blind as that of an executioner. Then was his anger with such an instrument becoming him?

The mulatto whistled, the carriage returned. Henri hastily sprang in. Already some curious simpletons had gathered on the boulevard. Henri was strong, he would have a game with the mulatto.

Presently the carriage started off at a round trot, then he seized him by the hands, intending by holding them to render him powerless; by thus checking his keeper, he could exercise his faculties in order to learn whither he went. Useless attempt. The eyes of the mulatto sparkled in the darkness. He repressed the cries of rage which expired in his throat, released himself by throwing off de Marsay with a hand of iron; he confined him, so to speak, at the bottom of the carriage; then with his free hand he drew a triangular poniard, and whistled. The driver hearing the whistle at once stopped.

Henri was unarmed, he was compelled to submit; he held his head for the handkerchief. This gesture of submission appeased Cristemio, who placed the bandage over his eyes with a respect and care which bore witness to a kind of veneration for the person of the man loved by his idol. But, before taking this precaution, he had defiantly placed the poniard in the sheath at his side and buttoned himself up to the chin.

“He would have killed me, this Chinaman,” said de Marsay.

The carriage again rolled rapidly along. There remained one resource to a young man who knew Paris as well as Henri did. To know whither he went it was sufficient for him to gather, by counting the number of gutters he crossed, what

were passed on the boulevards and along which the carriage continued going to the right. He could thus recognize by what lateral street the carriage diverged, whether toward the Seine or toward the heights of Montmarte, and to guess the name of the street where his guide should finally stop.

But the violent emotion caused by his struggle, his rage at having his dignity compromised, his ideas of revenge to which he gave himself up, the suppositions suggested to him by the minute care taken in conducting him to this mysterious girl, all these obstacles had blunted the necessary concentration of his attention, intelligence, and the perfect perspicacity of his memory.

The journey lasted for half an hour. When the carriage stopped, it was no longer on the paved streets. The mulatto and driver took Henri by "leg and wing," lifted him, and carried him in a sort of litter fashion across a garden in which he smelt flowers and the peculiar scent of trees and grass. The silence that reigned was so profound that he was able to distinguish the noise made by some drops of water falling from the humid leaves.

The two men mounted some steps with him, here they set him down, guiding him by the hand, finally leaving him in a room the atmosphere of which was perfumed and where, under his feet, he felt a thick carpet. The hand of a woman pushed him on to a divan and removed the bandage from his eyes. Henri saw Paquita before him, but it was Paquita in her glory of female voluptuousness.

That part of the boudoir in which Henri found himself was formed in a soft, gracious circular form, the part opposite being of a perfectly square shape, in the middle of which glittered a chimney mantel of white marble and gold. It was entered by a lateral door hidden by a curtain of rich tapestry, and was opposite a window. The veritable ornamented Turkish divan was of a horseshoe shape ; that is to say, it was a low mattress, but was as large as a bed, on a divan with

fifty turned feet, upholstered in white cashmere, relieved by knots of deep scarlet and black silk of lozenge shape. The back of this immense bed was elevated many inches at the upper part by the numerous cushions which enriched it, and could be arranged agreeable to the taste. This boudoir was hung with a soft red stuff, on which fluted India lawn was deftly draped into Corinthian columns, by alternate pipings of crosses and circles, being finished at top and bottom by a band of red poppy colored stuff on which a number of black arabesques were designed.

Under the lawn the scarlet became rose color, an amorous color, which matched the curtains over the window, which were of India lawn looped over rose taffeta and ornamented with scarlet and black fringes. Six silver-gilt brackets supported each two wax-candles, being attached to the tapestry at equal distances apart, for lighting the divan. The ceiling, from the centre of which hung a lustre of dull silver gilt, sparkled with whiteness, and the cornice was golden. The carpet resembled an Oriental shawl covered with designs full of the poetry of Persia, and upon which the hands of its slaves had worked.

The furniture was draped in white cashmere prettily set off with scarlet and black. The clock and candelabra were of white marble and gold. The only table there had a cashmere cover. Some elegant jardinières contained every species of roses, or red and white flowers. Indeed, the least detail seemed to have been carefully chosen with an eye to love. Never had riches coquettishly shown such a hidden elegance, expressing gracefulness and inspiring voluptuousness. Here everything would have warmed up the coldest heart. The chasteness of the ceiling, the color of which changed as the look followed it, being first all white and then all rose color, and matched with the effect of the lights which were mellowed under the diaphanous shades of lawn, producing a misty appearance in the room.

As I have never known a being who is not fond of white, so love is pleased with red, and gold flatters the passions, it has the power of realizing their fancies. So all that this man had that was vague and mysterious in himself, all his affinities that were inexplicable, he here found caressing him by their involuntary sympathies. He had here in this perfect harmony a concert of colors to which his soul responded in his voluptuous ideas, indecisive and floating.

It was in the midst of this vaporous air charged with exquisite perfumes that Paquita, dressed in a white dressing-gown, her feet bare, orange flowers in her black tresses, appeared to Henri, kneeling before him, like the worshiper when the god of the temple has deigned to visit it. Therefore de Marsay, habituated as he was to seeing Parisian luxury, was surprised at the aspect of this shell, which might have done for Venus' grotto.

Whether it was in consequence of the contrast between the darkness from which he had emerged into the light which bathed his soul, whether it was a rapid comparison made between this scene and that of his former interview, it proved one of those delicate sensations which give birth to true poetry. Perceiving, in the centre of this little habitation, hatched by the wand of a fairy, the masterpiece of creation, this girl, whose warm-colored tint and soft skin, lightly golden by the reflection of the crimson and by the effusion of I know not what effluxion of love, which scintillated as if she reflected the rays of light and of the colors, his rage, his desire for vengeance, his wounded pride, all fell. Like an eagle which has found its prey, he pressed a live body; he seated her on his knees, and felt with an unspeakable intoxication the voluptuous pressure of this girl, whose largely developed beauties sweetly enfolded her.

“Come, Paquita!” said he, in a low voice.

“Speak up, speak without fear,” said she to him. “This retreat has been built for love. No sound can escape, all has

been carefully done here to prevent the loss of any accents of the best-beloved voice. Whatever outcry may be made in this citadel they can never hear it outside this *enceinte*. Here one could slay some one, their petitions and vain entreaties would be the same as if made in the middle of a desert."

"Who then has so well understood jealousy and its needs?" he asked.

"Never question me in reference to this," she replied, untying, with an unbelievably gentle touch, the cravat of the young man, that she might the better see his neck.

"Yes, there is the neck that I shall love forever," said she. "Would you do me a pleasure?"

This question, the accent of which made it almost lascivious, brought de Marsay out of a reverie into which he had been plunged, the despotic response by which Paquita had interdicted all research on the unknown person who, like a shadow, had arranged all these advantages for them.

"And if I would know who reigned here?"

Paquita looked at him and shivered.

"This has not been done for me," said he, rising and disengaging himself of the girl, whose head fell back. "Where I am concerned I would be alone."

"He will strike me, strike me!" cried the poor slave, a prey to terror.

"For what do you take me? Can you reply?"

Paquita slowly rose, with tears in her eyes, went to one or two ebony caskets, and from one took a dagger and offered it to Henri, with a gesture of submission which would have moved a tiger.

"Give me a fête such as is given by men when they love," said she, "and, then, while I sleep, kill me, for I cannot answer you. Listen! I am fastened like a poor animal to its picket; I am astonished at having been able to throw a bridge over the gulf which had separated us. Intoxicate me, then kill me.

"Ah! no, no," said she, wringing her hands, "do not kill me, I love life. Life is very beautiful to me. If I am a slave, I am also a queen. I am abashed by your words. You say that I must not love you; prove me; profit by my temporary empire to say: 'Take me as a little taste, the passing perfume of a flower in the garden of a king.' Then, after having unfolded the subtle eloquence of a woman and the wings of pleasure, after having slaked my thirst, I can then throw myself into a pit where no person can find me, and which has been dug to satisfy a vengeance without any dread of that of justice; a pit full of quicklime will consume one without leaving a trace of ever having been. You will always rest in my heart, you will always be mine."

Henri gazed at this girl without a tremor, and her look was without fear and full of joy.

"No, I am not chained. You have not fallen here into a trap, but into the heart of a woman who adores you, and it is myself who throws her into that well."

"All this seems awfully funny to me," said de Marsay, examining himself. "But you appear to be a good girl, though of a fantastical nature; you are, on the faith of an honest man, a living charade the word of which seems particularly difficult to discover."

Paquita understood nothing of what was said by the young man; she looked at him sweetly, and with wide staring eyes not altogether unlike an animal; all she was filled with was voluptuousness.

"Now, my love," said she, returning to her first idea, "will you do me a pleasure?"

"I will do all that you wish me, and also what you may not wish me to do," replied the smiling de Marsay, who found himself at his ease, now that he had taken the resolution to leave all to the course of his good luck without looking behind him or into the future. Then, perhaps, counting on his power and on his knowledge of men and his good luck

for dominating for some hours, more or less, this girl, and learning all her secrets.

"Well, then," said she to him, "leave it to me to arrange how—to my taste."

"Yes, dish yourself up to me in your own style," said Henri.

Paquita then joyously took from a cabinet a robe of scarlet velvet in which she clothed de Marsay, using for herself as head-dress a lace cap and a rich shawl *entortilla*. Giving herself up to these frivolities, done with the innocence of a child, she burst into a convulsive laugh, which made her resemble a bird flapping its wings; but she could not see what was beyond.

It were impossible to paint the unheard-of delights which inspired these two beautiful creatures placed by heaven at that moment in a state of joyousness; it is perhaps necessary to translate metaphysically the almost fantastic and altogether extraordinary impressions of the young man.

The people who occupy the social scale in which de Marsay moved, and who live as he lived, well understand that the best thing they know is the innocence of a young girl. But, a strange thing, if the girl with the golden eyes was a virgin, she most certainly was not pure. The fantastical combination of the mysterious and real, of light and shadow, of the horrid and the beautiful, of pleasure and danger, of paradise and hell, with which he had already met in the course of this adventure, was continually shown in her play with de Marsay. All this voluptuousness, the most refined that he had ever known, showed to Henri all that poetry of the senses that is called love; but this was surpassed by the treasures unfolded by that girl, whose yellow eyes belied no promise that they had made. It was an Oriental poem, the radiant sun that shines out in the bounding strophes of Saadi and Hafiz; only that neither Saadi's rhythm nor that of Pindar could in any sense depict the ecstatic plenitude of confusion nor the stupor

which had seized this *delicious* girl when he discontinued the error of using his hand of iron and allowed her to breathe.

“Death!” said she. “I am dead. Adolphe, carry me away to the end of the earth, to an island where no one can find me. Let us fly and leave no trace behind us. We shall be followed even to hell itself. My God, it is day—save yourself. I shall always revere you. Yes, to-morrow I will receive you; the cost of this so great happiness is the death of all those who look after my safety. We meet to-morrow.”

She lay in his arms as in a stirrup, and he there saw all the torture of death. Then she pushed a button, which was responded to by the sound of a bell, begging de Marsay to allow her to bandage his eyes.

“And if I would rather not; if I determine to stay here?”

“You would be the cause of my speedy death,” said she, “for even now I am sure of dying for you.”

Henri took the chances. He recognized that the man who is gorged with pleasure is on the declivity toward oblivion; he could not be ungrateful; but a desire for liberty, a fancy to take a walk, a tinge of scorn or possibly of disgust for her idol, or, indeed, some inexplicable sentiment might have made him infamous and ignoble to her. The certainty of that confused but genuine affection among souls which are not illumined by that celestial light, nor perfumed by that holy balm which is associated with a pertinacity of sentiment, without a doubt dictated to Rousseau the adventures of Lord Edward, which conclude the letters of “*la Nouvelle Héloïse*.” Rousseau was evidently inspired by Richardson’s work; he is far from it in a thousand details which leave his monument more magnificent than the original; he is recommended to posterity by a thousand ideas which are most difficult to either explain or analyze, when, in youth, we read this work with the design of finding therein a heated description of the most physical of our feelings, while the serious and philosophical

writings are not always used as the consequence or the necessity of a great thought ; the adventures of Lord Edward are one of the ideas the most delicately European in that work.

Henri, a creature of the Empire, confused this sentiment, inasmuch as he had not known real love. In some way he failed in the persuasive art of comparisons, and his irresistible attractions of the memory were what brought women to his side. Above all, true love lives by the memory. The woman whose soul is not engraved upon, either by an excess of pleasure or a strength of feeling, can she ever be said to be in love ? Unknown to Henri, Paquita had thus established him in two manners. But at this moment, entirely worn out with happiness, that delightful melancholy of the body, he could hardly analyze his heart as he tasted on her lips the flavor of the most delicious voluptuousness that he had ever plucked.

That morning, at a very early hour, he had found himself on the Boulevard Montmartre, looking stupidly at his runaway equipage ; he drew two cigars out of his pocket and lit one at the lamp of the good woman who sold the brandy and coffee to workmen, *gamins*, hucksters, and all that Parisian population who commence life before the opening of the day ; then he had gone, smoking his cigar, his hands in his trousers' pockets, with an indifference that was really disgraceful.

“ What a good thing is a cigar. It is one of those things that never forsakes a man,” said he.

This girl with the golden eyes, who at this time had sent crazy all the fashionable young women of Paris, he now dreamed of punishing. This idea of death was brought forth to cross his pleasure, and whose fear had again shadowed the face of this beautiful being, who took after the houris of Asia, on her mother's side, belonging to Europe by her education, to the tropics by her birth, seemed to him to be one of those seducing deceivers who do thus to make themselves more interesting.

“ She is from Havana, the most Spanish of any country in

the new world ; she likes best of anything to play at terror, that she may throw me into much suffering, showing me the difficulty, the coquetry, or the duty, the same as Parisian women do. By her eyes of gold, I have a great desire for sleep."

He saw a hack standing at the corner of Frascati's, awaiting some gambler; he awoke the driver, telling him to drive him home ; he went to bed and slept the sleep of the good-for-nothing, which, by an anachronism not a single songwriter has as yet struck, is proven to be more sound than that of innocence. Perhaps this is an effect of that proverbial axiom : "Extremes meet."

About midday de Marsay woke, stretched his arms, and felt as hungry as a famished dog, the same feeling that all old soldiers can well remember on the day following a victory. As he saw Paul de Manerville before him he was well pleased, for nothing can be more agreeable than to eat in company.

"Well," said his friend, "we can imagine all that was comprised during ten hours with the girl with golden eyes."

"The girl with golden eyes ! why, I will not think of her again. By my faith, I have other fish to fry."

"Ah ! you are discreet."

"Why not ?" said de Marsay, smiling. "My dear fellow, discretion is easier than calculation. Listen—— but, no, I won't tell you a thing. You would not be able to understand anything ; I am not disposed to cast my pearls before swine. Life is a river which facilitates commerce. For all that, my doings are the most sacred things on earth ; by my cigars ! I am not a professor of social economy set at the door of ninnies. Confound it. It is easier to cut an omelette than to fatigue my brain."

"Is this how you talk to your friends ?"

"My dear fellow," said Henri, who rarely refused an opening for his sarcasm like that of this time, "to you above another I give the reward of discretion ; that is because I like

you so much. Yes, I love you. On my word of honor, you would not fail in finding me a bill for a thousand francs, by which you might hinder me heating my brains; you would find it for me, for we have nothing left to hypothecate, eh, Paul? If you should fight to-morrow, I would measure the distance and charge the pistols, in order that your arm would kill in a proper manner. Indeed, if any other person were to speak ill of you to me in your absence, he would have to take the measure of the rude gentleman whom you have found in my skin; there, that is what I call proving my friendship.

“ Well, when you would have the reward of discretion, my boy, bear in mind that there are two kinds of discretion—the active and the negative. Negative discretion is that of fools and is silence—the *négation*, the frown, the discretion of closed doors, a true pusillanimity. Active discretion proceeds from the affirmative. If this evening, in our circle, I said: ‘On the faith of an honest man, the girl with golden eyes is not worth what she has cost me,’ all of them, when I had gone out, would exclaim: ‘Did you hear that dude of a de Marsay, he tried to make us believe that he was already through with the girl with the golden eyes? He wishes to be left unembarrassed with rivals; he is not very smart though.’

“ Now that scheme is both vulgar and dangerous. Some would have the silliness to let this escape: it is made known to every simpleton, who all believe it. The best of all dispositions is that used by clever women when they have had a change from their husbands. It consists in compromising a woman on which we have no hold, or that we do not love, or that we have not had, and thus preserving the honor of that one that we both love and respect. This is what I call the ‘screen-woman.’ Ah! here is Laurent. What are you bringing in? ”

“ Ostend oysters, Monsieur le Comte.”

“ Some day you will know, Paul, how amusing it is to the world to steal the secret of our affections. I find an im-

mense satisfaction in avoiding the stupid jurisdiction of the mob, which never knows what it wants, nor what it wishes, which takes the means for the result, which by turns worships and hates, or elevates and destroys. That happiness which is aroused by the emotions they can never receive, they cannot subdue it nor make it obedient to them. If they are perhaps proud of something, is it not by what they can acquire for themselves, which we sum up as the prime cause, the effect, the principal and the result? Well, no man can tell whom I love, unless I so will it. Perhaps some time I may tell you whom I love, that will be when I want you to know, so you may learn how the drama was worked out; but allow you to see into my game?—weakness, fraud. I know nothing more reprehensible than the forced play of cunning. In my smile I imitate the trade of an ambassador; is not that of the diplomatist the most difficult in life? Without a doubt. Are you ambitious? Would you become something?"

"Henri, you do but mock me; I am altogether too mediocre for that."

"Well, Paul, if you go on mocking at yourself, you will soon be mocking at all the world."

After breakfast, and as he smoked his cigar, de Marsay began to see the events of the past night in a strange light. How many great intelligences with his perspicacity and spontaneity but would try to delve to the bottom of things? Among all gentle natures there is a faculty of living beside that of the present, which expresses, as one may say, the juice which it devours; his second sight lacked one kind of slumber by which to identify causes. Cardinal de Richelieu was possessed of clairvoyance, so necessary for the conception of great undertakings. De Marsay found all the conditions, but he was unable to present arms to his profits and pleasures, and did not become one of the most profound politicians until the time arrived when he was actually saturated with pleasure, which always comes at last to all young men, and from whence,

if at all, they begin to look for gold and power. This is the man of bronze : he uses woman for what woman has no power to use herself.

At this moment then de Marsay perceived that he had been played with by the girl with golden eyes, seeing in all that had happened that night whose pleasures were not of that gradually gushing-out kind, which end by pouring down in torrents. Then he could read on this page, so brilliant in effect, and guess the concealed sense. The purely physical innocence of Paquita, the astonishment of her delight, a few words, now obscure, now clear, escaped in the midst of her ravishment, all this proved to him that he was posing for some other person. How could any social corruptions be unknown to him, who professed to treat every caprice with perfect indifference, and believed himself justified by having already been given satisfaction ; he was not afraid of vice, he knew how to understand a friend, but he was hurt if taken advantage of. So these presumptions were just, he had been outraged to the quick. This sole suspicion took fire ; he would break the roaring tiger and scoff at the gazelle ; the cry of a tiger was joined to the strength of a beast and the intelligence of a demon.

“ Well, of what are you thinking ? ” said Paul.

“ Nothing.”

“ I can’t take that in ; if I ask if you have anything against me, you answer ‘ Nothing ; ’ seemingly, he is about fighting to-morrow.”

“ I shall not fight again,” said de Marsay.

“ This seems more and more tragic. Are you going to assassinate some one ? ”

“ You mix the words. I execute.”

“ My dear friend,” said Paul, “ your jests are very well at night, but this is morning.”

“ What will you ! voluptuousness is the same as ferocity. Why ? I do not know, and I am not sufficiently inquisitive

to search out the cause. These cigars are excellent. Give your friend some tea. Do you know, Paul, that I am leading the life of a brute? He would in good time choose a destiny for himself, employ his strength at something which would be full of value to his existence. Life is a strange comedy. I am afraid, I laugh at the absurdity of our social conditions. The government slices off the heads of the poor devils who kill a man, and issues diplomas to creatures who for expediency, in medical parlance, kill a dozen young men every winter. Morals are without force against a dozen vices which destroy society, and which nothing punishes.

*“Encore the cup. On my word of honor! man is a clown who dances on the edge of a precipice. Now we speak of the immorality of ‘Dangerous Liaisons,’ and of I know not what other book which has the name of a chamber-maid; but there is in existence a horrible book, smutty, frightful, corrupt, always open, which one can never close; the great book of the world, without counting that other book, a thousand times more dangerous, which contains all that has been overheard, between men, or under women’s fans, each evening at a ball.”*

“Henri, it is most certain that you have gone through some extraordinary event, and already I can see it in spite of your ‘active discretion.’”

“Yes! for a fact, he was almost devoured at this time last evening. It’s all in the play. Perhaps I shall have the happiness of the lost.”

De Marsay rose, took a roll of bank-bills, placed them in his box of cigars, dressed, and took advantage of Paul’s carriage to go to the *Salon des Etrangers*, where, previous to dinner, he passed the time in play and changing alternately from winner to loser, the last resort of strong organizations, when they are restrained to exercise in a void. At night he went to the rendezvous and allowed himself to be complacently bandaged about the eyes. Then with the firm will, which only really strong men have the power of concentrating,

he turned his attention and applied his whole intelligence to guess by what streets he had passed in the carriage. He felt a kind of certainty of having been driven to the Rue Saint-Lazare, stopping at the wicket-gate of the garden attached to the San-Réal mansion.

When for the first time he passed this gate, and through which he had, without doubt, been carried in litter fashion by the mulatto and coachman, in the meantime he had noticed the crunching of the gravel under their feet, which showed the reason why they took such minute precautions. It could have been seen, if he had been at liberty, where he had walked by the impressions of his feet, for he pushed aside a branch of the shrubs and saw that the path was of a material which would cling to their boots; while being transported, as it were, through the air, his good fortune could only be ascribed to the raving of a dream. But, to the despair of man, he can see nothing but imperfections, whether it be good or whether it be bad. All his works, be they intellectual or physical, are signed with the sign of destruction.

A slight rain was falling, the earth was moist. During the night certain vegetable odors are much stronger than in the day; Henri had smelt the perfume of mignonette along the path by which he had been carried. This indication should render easy the researches he promised himself to make in reconnoitring the hôtel in which he believed Paquita's boudoir was to be found.

All the same he studied the route by which he had been carried to the house, and quite believed that he could afterward recall it.

He saw himself as on the previous day, when, on the ottoman before Paquita, she had unbandaged his eyes; but he saw her pale and changed. She was weeping; kneeling like an angel in prayer, but an angel that was sad and in deep melancholy, the poor girl little resembled the inquisitive, impatient, bounding creature who had taken de Marsay on her

wings and transported him to the seventh heaven of love. There was something so real in the pleasure-veiled despair that the terrible de Marsay felt a further admiration for this new masterpiece of nature, and forgot for the nonce the principal concern of the assignation.

“What is the matter, my Paquita?”

“My friend,” said she, “carry me off this very night. Take me to some place where no one can say on seeing me: ‘There is Paquita;’ where no person can reply: ‘He has there a long-haired girl, with a golden glance.’ There I could give you more pleasure than you can receive here from me. Then, when you did not love me any more, you could leave me, I would make no complaint, I would say nothing; and if you deserted me it would not then cause you any remorse, for one day passed near you, only one little day, will seem to me of more value than every other day of my life.”

“I don’t intend quitting Paris, my girl,” replied Henri. “I am not going to leave it; I am bound by an oath to the fate of many people who are to me the same as I am to them. But I can make you an asylum in Paris where no human power can come near you.”

“No,” said she; “you forget women’s power.”

Never had a sentence pronounced by a human voice expressed so full a complement of terror.

“What could possibly come near you, if I stood between you and the world?”

“Poison!” said she. “Already Doña Concha is suspicious of you— And,” she continued, letting fall the tears which glistened along her cheeks, “it must be plain to be seen that I am not the same as I was. Well, if you abandon me to the fury of the monster who would devour me, if that is your saintly will—so be it. But come, let us have all the voluptuousness of life in our love; I beg, I weep, I cry; I might defend myself, I might perhaps be saved.”

“Who are you imploring?” he asked.

“Silence!” said Paquita. “If I obtain my desire, this would be because of my discretion.”

“Give me my scarlet robe,” said Henri, insidiously.

“No, no,” she quickly replied; “stay as you are, one of our angels have apprised me that I should hate you, in which I cannot see the shape of a monster, while really you are the most beautiful being under the heavens,” said she, stroking Henri’s hair. “You don’t know how near I am to an ignoramus. I have been taught nothing. Since I was twelve years old, I have been kept closed up without having seen a soul. I do not know how to either read or write; I speak only English and Spanish.”

“How comes it then that you receive letters from London?”

“Letters for me? Well, here they are,” said she, taking out of a Japanese vase a quantity of papers.

She held them out to de Marsay; to the surprise of the young man these letters were covered with fantastic figures something like those seen in a rebus, traced out in blood, and which seemed to express burning sentences surcharged with passion.

“But,” he exclaimed, admiring the hieroglyphics easily deciphered by jealousy, “are you under the power of an infernal genius?”

“Infernal!” she repeated.

“But how comes it, then, that you have been able to go out?”

“Ah!” said she, “they were afraid of losing me. I had Doña Concha between the fear of immediate death and a fury that would bring me to it. I have the curiosity of a demon; I wished to break the circle that had been built about me, which came between creation and myself; I made up my mind that I would see some young men, for I knew no other men than the marquis and Cristemio. Our coachman and footman who accompany us are old men——”

"But you were not always kept in seclusion? Your health would——"

"Ah!" she answered, "we took walks at times, but it was during the night and in the country, on the banks of the Seine, far from the world."

"Are you not proud of being so loved?"

"No," said she. "Although well occupied, this dark, hidden life cannot be compared to that of the light."

"What do you call the light?"

"You, my beautiful Adolphe; for I would give my life for you. All the passionate things of which I have spoken and that I inspire, I have received from you. At certain times I understand nothing of existence; but now I know how we love, and up to the present I only was loved; I love not myself. I would leave all to follow you; take me away. If you will, take me as a plaything, but leave me when you are sick of me."

"You would not regret it?"

"Not at all," said she, allowing him to read her eyes; which, tinted in gold, shone out pure and clear.

"Am I the preferred one?" said Henri to himself, who fancied she spoke truthfully, finding himself disposed to pardon the offense in favor of a love so innocent. "I really believe she is true," he thought.

If Paquita gave any thought to the past, the least memory of such in his eyes would become a crime. He had therefore the sad thought of having an idea of this, of judging his mistress, of studying her when all given up to pleasures the most entrancing that had always descended from heaven upon those who had loved him well.

Paquita seemed to have been created for love, with a special care of nature. From one night to the other her feminine genius had made the most rapid progress. Some who saw the power and insouciance of this young man taking his pleasure, in spite of the satiety of yesterday, would find in the girl with

golden eyes that which we all know is created in the woman in love and to which no man is ever given up.

Paquita responded to this passion which experienced all that truly great men feel for the infinite, a mysterious passion, so dramatically expressed in "Faust," so poetically translated in "Manfred," and which enabled Don Juan to raze the hearts of women, who expect to find ideas without setting limits to the search or having to set up themselves that he might chase spectres; that the learned think is found in science, and that the mystical believe is found in God alone.

The hope of having at last the ideal being, for which he had constantly struggled, without fatigue, quite ravished de Marsay, who, for the first time, or for a long while back, now opened his heart. His nerves relaxed, his coolness melted in the warm atmosphere of that brilliant soul, his sharp-edged doctrines were annulled, and happiness colored his life, the same as it had this boudoir with white and pink.

Feeling the sting of a superior voluptuousness, he was already constrained by the limits in which he was now inclosed by his passion. He would not be surpassed by this woman, so that some sort of an artificial love was formed in advance to bring rewards to his soul, and then he found, in that vanity which possesses man, that he would remain the conqueror by forces unknown to this girl; but also by throwing beyond this line, where the soul of the mistress is the same as his own, he was lost between her delicious limbs in what the vulgar so naïvely call the "imaginary space." It was tender, sweet, and communicative. It made Paquita nearly crazy.

"Why should we not go to Sorrento, Nice, or Chivavari, and there pass our lives together? Would you like this?" said he to Paquita, in a penetrating voice.

"Why do you ask me 'will you?'" she cried. "Are you willing? I don't care where it is, to be with you is my pleasure. If you would choose a retreat that is worthy of us,

then Asia is the only country where love can display its wings——”

“ You are right,” said Henri. “ We will go to the Indies ; there spring is eternal, where the ground is always covered with flowers, where man may display the clothing of sovereigns without comment, like is done in the country of imbeciles where they try to realize the chimera of equality. There in that country, where we can live in the midst of a people of slaves, where the sun for ever illuminates the white palace in which we reside, where the scent of perfumes is ever in the air, where the birds sing their love, and where one may die when one loves no more.”

“ And where we can die together,” said Paquita. “ Do not put off the going until to-morrow, let us go this instant—take Cristemio.”

“ By my faith, pleasure is the most beautiful issue of life. On to Asia ; but to go there, my child, requires much gold, and to have this gold I must arrange my business.”

She understood nothing of this.

“ Of gold, there is enough of that here,” said she, pressing his hand.

“ It is not mine.”

“ What does that matter ? ” she asked. “ If we need it, take it.”

“ It does not belong to you.”

“ Belong ! ” she repeated. “ What have I that you have not ? When we have taken it, it belongs to us.”

He smiled.

“ Poor innocent girl ; you know nothing of the things of the world.”

“ No, but here is something that I do know,” said she, drawing Henri down on herself.

At the precise moment when de Marsay had forgotten everything, and conceived the desire of appropriating this creature for ever, he received in the midst of his delight a

dagger-stroke which bit by bit went to his heart, which was vexed for the first time. Paquita, who had vigorously raised herself in the air to gaze at him, now cried out :

“ Oh ! Margarita ! ”

“ Margarita ! ” exclaimed the young man in a roar ; “ I now know all that I previously had doubts of.”

He sprang to the cabinet in which the long dagger had been placed. Happily for Paquita and himself, the cabinet was locked. His fury was increased by this obstacle ; but he recovered his tranquillity, took up his cravat, and advanced toward her with so significantly a ferocious manner, that, without knowing of what crime she was guilty, Paquita nevertheless knew that his intention was to slay her.

She made one bound and sprang to the side of the room to avoid the fatal noose which de Marsay tried to fling around her neck. There they had a contest. Each was a counterpart of the other—the suppleness, the agility, and the rage being equal. To finish the struggle Paquita threw a cushion between the legs of her lover, which flung him down, then, profiting by the respite which this advantage allowed her, she pressed the button and it was immediately responded to. The mulatto suddenly appeared. In the wink of an eye, Cristemio flung himself on de Marsay, threw him on the ground, placing his foot on his chest, with his heel turned to his throat. De Marsay at once understood that, if he struggled, he would be at that moment crushed to death on a single sign from Paquita.

“ Why do you wish to kill me, my love ? ” she asked.

De Marsay made no reply.

“ What have I done ? ” she went on. “ Speak, explain to us.”

Henri preserved the phlegmatic attitude of a strong man when he feels that he is vanquished ; of cold countenance, silent, all English, which tells of the consciousness of his dignity being for that moment overthrown. Nevertheless, he

was already deep in thought, in spite of the importunity of his fury, seeing how little prudence he had shown and of the injustice of killing this girl unawares without having prepared for her death in a manner proper to assure its impunity.

"My good friend," Paquita went on; "speak to me; do not leave me without a farewell of love. I will not regard the dread which you have planted in my heart. Won't you speak to me?" said she, stamping her foot with rage.

De Marsay answered by throwing her a significant look, which plainly said:

"You shall die."

Paquita threw herself on him.

"Well, do you wish to kill me? If my death will give you pleasure—kill me."

She made a sign to Cristemio, who raised his foot from the young man and allowing her to see his face, which should give a judgment of good or ill on Paquita.

"There is a man," said de Marsay, pointing to the mulatto with a sinister gesture. "He not only has devotion, but a devotedness that obeys whom it loves without question. You have a true friend in that man."

"I will give him to you, if you wish," she replied; "he would serve you with the same devotion that he has for me, if I advise him so to do."

She awaited a word in reply, then went on, in an accent full of tenderness:

"Adolphe, speak one good word to me. It will soon be day."

Henri made no reply. This young man had one sad quality, for he looked on it as being a great thing, all this concentration of strength, which is often carried by men to extravagant lengths. Henri did not know the word "Forgive." To know how to draw back, which is certainly one of the soul's graces, was in no sense his. The ferocity of men of the North, with which English blood is strongly tainted,

had been transmitted to him from his sire. He was as immovable in his good as in his bad sentiments. The exclamation of Paquita was all the more horrible for him, for he had been dethroned from the sweetest triumph which had ever aggrandized the vanity of man.

The hopes, the love, and all the feelings which had exalted him, all that had flamed in his heart and mind; then these flames, lighted by the brightness of his life, had been suddenly smothered and become cold. Paquita, stupefied, had no more power in her sadness than to give the signal for him to go.

“This is useless,” said she, throwing down the bandanna handkerchief. “If he loves me no more, if he hates me, all is at an end.”

She waited for a look; she did not get one, and fell upon the floor half-dead. The mulatto threw a glance on Henri which was dreadfully significant, and which, for the first time in the life of this young man, caused him to tremble, for to few persons was given his rare intrepidity.

“If you have not loved her well, if you cause her the least pain, I will kill you,” was in the sense of that quick glance.

De Marsay was conducted with the same servile care along a vast corridor lighted by early dawn, and out of the end of which he went by a secret door in the private stairway which ran to the garden belonging to the *San-Réal hôtel*. The mulatto, for precaution, walked along a tiled pathway which abutted on a wicket-gate giving on the street, which at this time was quite deserted.

De Marsay carefully noted everything; the carriage was in attendance; this time the mulatto did not accompany him; and, at the moment when Henri pushed his head through the curtains to look at the garden of the mansion, he met the white eyes of Cristemio, with whom he exchanged glances. On both sides this was a look of provocation, a defiance, an announcement of savage warfare, of a duel not guided by

ordinary laws, in which treason and perfidy had at least admission.

Cristemio knew that Henri had condemned Paquita to death. Henri knew that Cristemio decreed his death before he could kill Paquita. Each considered himself the best.

“The adventure is complicated with a feature to make it more interesting,” said Henri.

“To where does monsieur wish to go?” asked the coachman.

De Marsay was driven to Paul de Manerville’s home.

During the greater part of this week Henri was away from home; where he was all this time no person knew, nor in what place he lived. This retreat saved him from the fury of the mulatto, and caused the ruin of the poor creature who had taken away all the hope she had of being loved, like as every other creature hopes for love on this earth.

The last day of the week, toward eleven at night, Henri went in a carriage to the wicket-gate of the garden of the mansion of San-Réal. Four men were in his company. The coachman was evidently one of his friends, for he went straight to his seat, like an attentive sentinel listening for the least noise. One of the three others rang the bell at the gate in the street; the second made into the garden, standing on the wall; the last, who held in his hand a bunch of keys, went with de Marsay.

“Henri,” said his companion, “we are betrayed.”

“By whom, my good Ferragus?”

“They are not asleep,” said the chief of the devorants. “It shows absolutely that none in the house has drunk or eaten anything. There, see that light?”

“We have the plan of the house. Where is she?”

“I have no need of the plan to learn that,” replied Ferragus; “she is in the marquise’s room.”

“Ah!” exclaimed de Marsay. “She has, without a doubt,

arrived here from London to-day. That woman has not incurred my vengeance. But, if she comes in my path, my good Gratien, we deliver her to our justice."

"S—sh, listen ! the deed is done," said Ferragus to Henri.

The two friends lent their ears to the feeble cries with all the savage attention of tigers.

"Your marquise did not think that people could come to see her kill by way of the chimney," said the chief of the devorants, with the laugh of a critic, enchanted in finding a flaw in a masterpiece.

"We only, we know all things," said Henri. "Listen to me. I want to go and see how she passes up on high, in order to learn the manner of treating quarrels in their household. By the name of God, I think that she will, for a fact, be broiled on a little fire."

De Marsay lightly climbed the stairway which he knew was the way to the boudoir. When he opened the door he had that involuntary shiver which causes the most determined man to shrink from the sight of spilt blood. The spectacle offered to his gaze had, beside, for him a great meed of astonishment. The marquise was a woman : she had calculated her vengeance with that perfection of perfidy which always distinguishes feeble animals. She had dissimulated her rage at the crime to assure its due punishment.

"Too late, my good friend," said Paquita, dying, whose pale eyes turned toward de Marsay.

The girl with golden eyes expired, weltering in her own blood. All the candles were aflame, a delicate perfume pervaded the room, a certain disorder, palpable to the eye of a clever man of the world who knows of the follies common to every passion, announced that the marquise had skillfully tortured the guilty one. This white apartment, in which the blood showed so distinctly, betrayed a long struggle. The hands of Paquita were indented in the cushions. Everywhere she had hung on for her life, everywhere she had defended

herself, and everywhere she had been stricken down. Some great fragments of the fluted tapestry had been torn down by her bloody hands, which told of a terrible and long-drawn struggle.

Paquita had tried to scale the ceiling ; her naked feet had marked the long back of the divan on which she had, without doubt, run. Her body, jagged with the thrusts given with the poniard by her executioner, told well with what fury she had fought for a life that Henri had made so dear to her. She lay on the floor, and had, in dying, bitten the muscles of the instep of Madame de San-Réal, who still held in her hand the poinard soaked in blood. The marquise's hair was dragged askew ; she was covered with bites which bled freely ; her torn dress allowed her to be seen half-naked and her bosom full of scratches.

She was in a manner sublime.

Her face, covetous and full of rage, breathed the odor of blood. Her panting mouth was partly open, and her nostrils were too small for her respirations. Certain animals, when seized with rage, spring full on their foes, seeming to have lost sight of everything else. There are others who twine about their victims, who hold them in fear so that they cannot arouse themselves, and who, like Homer's Achilles, will make nine tours around the walls of Troy and drag forth their enemies by their feet. Of such was the marquise. She did not see Henri. She was so sure of being alone that she had no fear of witnesses ; then her blood was up, she was too excited by the struggle, too inflamed to see all Paris, if all the people of Paris had formed a ring around her. She would not have felt a thunderbolt. She had not even heard Paquita's last sigh, and believed that she could still be heard by the dead.

“ Dead without confession,” said she to her ; “ gone to hell, monster of ingratitude ; who cares no more for a person than the devil. For the blood which you have given him, you now give all yours to me. Die, die, suffer a thousand deaths !

I have been too good ; I don't seem to have taken a moment in killing you ; I should like to have made you experience all the sorrow you have bequeathed me. I live, I. I live unhappy ; I am reduced to loving none beside God."

Awhile she stood contemplative.

"She is dead," said she, after a pause, making a violent return to herself. "Dead, ah ! I shall die of grief."

The marquise would have thrown herself on the divan, overwhelmed with a despair which showed itself in her voice, but this movement was prevented by seeing Henri de Marsay.

"Who are you?" said she, rushing at him with uplifted poniard.

Henri held her arm, and they stood face to face. An awful surprise seized both of them, turning the blood in their veins to ice, and their legs shook like those of horses when they are afraid. In fact, two *Ménechmes*\* could not more resemble each other. They both spoke the same words together.

"Is Lord Dudley your father?"

Each nodded affirmatively.

"She was true to the blood," said Henri, pointing to Paquita.

"It is possible that for this she was the less guilty," replied Margarita-Euphémia Porrabénil, throwing herself on Paquita's body, with a cry of despair.

"Poor girl, I wish I could reanimate you. I have done wrong ; forgive me, Paquita. You are dead, and I live, I. I am the more unfortunate."

At this moment appeared the horrible face of Paquita's mother.

"You came to tell me and sold her to death," cried the marquise. "I know what has brought you out of your hole. I will pay you twice over. There you are."

She took out of a drawer in an ebony cabinet a bag of gold which she flung disdainfully at the feet of the old woman.

\* Doubles, in French fiction.

The sound of the gold had the power to limn an imitation of a smile on the immobile physiognomy of the Georgian slave woman.

“I came in time for you, my sister,” said Henri. “The law will allow you to reclaim——”

“Nothing,” replied the marquise. “Only one person could ask an account of that girl. Cristemio is dead.”

“And this mother,” said Henri, pointing to the old woman; “will she never tell anything?”

“She belongs to a country where women are not beings, but things which have neither goods nor will; who are bought and sold; who may be killed, who are, in fact, subject to every caprice, and whom everybody treats as so many chattels. Nevertheless, they have a passion to which every other is subordinate—even the love of maternity; so, although she loved her daughter, she had the passion——”

“Of what?” asked Henri, quickly, interrupting his sister.

“Of gambling; whom God keep,” replied the marquise.

“But how comes it that you assist her,” said Henri, pointing to the girl with golden eyes; “is it that she may remove the traces of this fantasy, that your law has brought about?”

“I own her mother,” replied the marquise, pointing to the old Georgian, to whom she made a sign to stay.

“We shall meet again,” said Henri, who began to be uneasy about his friends, and saw the necessity for going.

“No, my brother,” said she; “we shall never meet again. I shall return to Spain and there enter the convent of *los Dolores*.”

“You are still young and too beautiful for that,” said Henri, pressing her in his arms and kissing her.

“Farewell,” said she; “nothing can ever console me for having sent a soul to be for ever lost.”

Eight hours after, Paul de Manerville met de Marsay at the Tuilleries, on the Terrasse des Feuillants.

“Well, what has become of our beautiful girl with the golden eyes, great rascal?”

“She is dead.”

“Of what?”

“Consumption.”

PARIS, *March, 1834–April, 1835.*











Date Due

200-00000000

150

MAY 15 1990



CAT. NO. 23 233

PRINTED IN U.S.A.

TRENT UNIVERSITY



0 1164 0108842 6

PQ2161 .G4 [v.32]  
Balzac, Honoré de  
The comédie humaine.

DATE

ISSUED TO  
**152481**

**152481**

